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THE TASK OF CONTEMPORARY PROTESTANT THEOLOGY

JEAN-LOUIS LEUBA

1. *The merit of dialectic theology*

THE GREAT MERIT of "dialectic" theologians, as they were first called in 1922 and still chose to be called around 1928, lay in their refutation of the basic tenets of classic liberalism. The critiques of these thinkers, in particular of Barth, Thurneysen, Gogarten, Bultmann and E. Brunner, had both a positive and negative conclusion, which may be located on quite different levels.

On one hand, as an approach to Christ, historical research could yield only more or less plausible conjectures: on such ground there could be no enduring certitude. On the other hand, contrary to the canons of liberal theology, the reality "which faith seeks to grasp could never be attained by means of scientific knowledge." Even if historical studies could lead to certitude, they still provide no access to the reality of faith. For faith—and this is the strong affirmation of dialectic theology—is of a fundamentally different order.

This article by Dr. Leuba first appeared in VERBUM CARO (Revue Théologique et ecclésiastique trimestrielle, \$2.75 a year, Communauté de Taizé, Saône-et-Loire, France), Vol. XII (no. 45), the first number of 1958. Dr. Leuba is a widely-respected theologian and a member of the Protestant monastic community of Taizé. VERBUM CARO is edited under his direction, and the review is published by the community.

In his introduction Dr. Leuba underlines the vastness of the subject, the restrictions of a magazine article, and the necessarily provisory and exploratory nature of his essay.

The revelation of which the Bible speaks is thus considered as anything but an object, a thing of this world. It is an "act" of God, an act which no man can comprehend and live without the direct assistance of God. As a deposit of knowledge, as a historical phenomenon attested to by documents, the Christian event is as banal, as worldly, as human, as little divine as any historical phenomenon. There is no common measure between God and man, and yet—the "scandal" of faith—God does communicate with men. Such is the dialectic nature of theological affirmation, valid only as an actual response to a question actually submitted by God to man.

And so, rejecting the theological value of positivist documentary history, which man constructs unassisted but which cannot lead him into the presence of God, dialectic theology centered its affirmation on the notion of divine revelation as a divine history, a divine doing.

From this center, dialectic theology has branched out in two different directions. Barth and Thurneysen, followed at first by E. Brunner and soon by a crowd of grateful disciples, dedicated themselves to the expression of the Biblical message as it appeared in the light of divine actualism, recognized as the key to Scripture. The term dialectic, too ambiguous, which gave the idea of an equal partnership of human and divine, was soon discarded. With incredible ardor, groups began to read, to comment on, and to preach Scripture—without neglecting the contribution of the history of the Church, which was considered essentially to be the history of

the reading and preaching of the gospel.

Those of us who were still liberal in the first semesters of our theological studies and who had been brought to a standstill with the liberal impasse, will never be able to express our gratitude for the help of dialectic theology at this point. We had so little. We were in no position to resolve the dilemma of liberal theology: either to limit oneself to the historical study of the Christian fact and be at a loss as to how to actualize the fact without falling into the arbitrary, or to force oneself to live by faith but then never to participate in the history of Christ, an event that was sealed off as an object of theoretical investigation. Barth and his followers pointed out to us the land of promise.

In earnestness and joy they opened the Bible before us, for us, for the Church, not as a document of the past but as a holy place where God speaks now, demanding from the listener a final commitment.

They studied the history of the Church not as something from without, the study of an evolution in which one has no part, but rather seeking and seeing in each epoch of the Church the perpetual presence of the divine acting word. This experience was, for us, and probably for the greater part of Protestantism, the enduring contribution of dialectic theology: an actualism that manifested with clarity and joy the truth that Jesus Christ is not an "object" before which the observer stands, but is rather his Judge and Lord, actually present, inseparable from the Word which saves and condemns.

It is not by chance that renewed biblical studies coincided with the upsurge of Barthian doctrine. What other result could have been effected by the rediscovery of the actuality of Scripture? And given the possibility of such an encounter, who would not seek the Scrip-

tures? The Church, for too long a time fluctuating between historicism and modernism, was to find its true source of life again!

Though one with Barth on the notion of divine actualism, Bultmann, later followed by many, and most resolutely by Gogarten, set out in another direction. His concern was to understand how divine activism operated concretely, how the preaching of the divine word could touch man. In effect, Bultmann sought explicitly to elaborate what he felt Barth either did unconsciously, or at least failed to account for theologically.

Like Barth, he did not intend to establish the preliminary condition of the action of Scripture which was actualized in preaching, but unlike him, he did not think that one could dispense with the examination of how the actualization of Scripture differed—and ought to differ—from the biblical formulas. It is not astonishing then that although these two theologians are contemporary, Bultmann's influence was slower in making itself felt; it is only since the war that he has enjoyed in Germany the role played by Barth since the 30's. The powerful actualization of Scripture by Barth was necessary before the problems raised by Bultmann could be fully posed.

Whatever one makes of the Barth-Bultmann debate, one fact is certain: dialectical theology as a whole has issued from essentially pneumatological preoccupations. Confronted with the historicism of liberal theology and the modernism which was its fatal consequence, it recalled that God alone, by his actual revelation, through his Holy Spirit, can put man in contact with the revelation to which the Bible bears witness; he wants to, and he does. It recalled that by faith Christ is present to man, and man is present to Christ, in the *actual* remembrance of the unique and defini-

tive epiphany of Jesus Christ, and in the actual hope of his Parousia—the term actual here being related to the very act of God.

2. *The difficulties of pure actualism*

a. Barth

THE MOST DIRECT WAY of pointing out the difficulties raised and left unsolved by Barthian theological actualism is to refer to the specific pages in which Barth discusses the theological theme of time in his *CHURCH DOGMATICS*, I, 2, § 14, (Scribner's).

Barth expresses the initial thesis in the following words: "God's revelation in the event of the presence of Jesus Christ is God's time for us. It is fulfilled time in this event itself. But as the Old Testament time of expectation and as the New Testament time of recollection, it is also the time of witness to this event" (p. 45). This notion is elaborated in a sub-paragraph called "God's Time and Our Time." If God reveals Himself, the author argues, "it is equivalent to the statement, 'God has time for us.' The time God has for us is just this time of His revelation . . . Thus we must let ourselves be told what time is by revelation itself, and only then, and with that reference, form our idea of the time of revelation as such" (p. 45). Creation cannot tell us what time is, for our time is that of fallen man, no longer that which God created in the beginning. With respect to these two times, that of creation and that of the fall, the time of Revelation is a third time (pp. 46-9).

"Just as man's existence became something new and different altogether, because God's Son assumed it and took it over into unity with his God-existence, just as by the eternal Word becoming flesh the flesh was not able to repeat Adam's sin, so time, by becoming the time of Jesus Christ, although it be-

longed to our time, the lost time, became a different, a new time (p. 51)." "Compared with our time it is mastered time and for that very reason real, fulfilled time (p. 52)" . . . "The Word spoken from eternity raises the time into which it is uttered (without dissolving it as time) up into His own eternity as now His own time, and gives it part in the existence of God which is alone real, self-moved, self-dependent, self-sufficient. It is spoken by God, a perfect without peer (not in our time, but in God's time created by the Word in the flesh, there is a genuine, proper, indissoluble, primal perfect), and for that reason there is coming into the world a future without peer (for not in our time but rather in this God's time created by the Word in the flesh there is a genuine, proper, indissoluble, primal future). And so it is a present that is not a present without also being a genuine perfect; and a perfect and a future, the mean of which constitutes a genuine, indestructible present. Yet it is not any present, hopelessly collapsing into a 'not yet' or a 'no longer' like every present in our time. It is *Deus praesens*, who always was and will always be and for that very reason has a genuine before and after; in other words, the active Lord of time, who in His action creates and sustains His own time out of the wretched span of this lost time of ours, the Lord before whom the longest time is the shortest and the shortest the longest, before whom the irreversibility of time is not for one moment in an indestructible position (pp. 52-3)."

Then comes a key passage: "In revelation God stands in for us entirely. And so also the time He creates for Himself in revelation, the genuine present, past and future of which we have been speaking, is presented to us entirely. It should, it can, it will become our time, since He directs His Word to us; we are

to become contemporary with this time of His. His genuine time takes the place of the problematic, improper time we know and have. It replaces it in that, amid the years and ages of this time of ours, the time of Jesus Christ takes the place of our time, coming to us as a glad message presented to us as a promise, and to be seized and lived in by us (p. 55)."

Having argued that Revelation becomes history but that the reverse is not possible, (p. 56-8) Barth continues his meditation on the Revelation of God in terms of this temporal notion, making three principal points:

1. The affirmation, "God reveals Himself," can only be the echo of a sovereign and ineluctable action of God Himself. It signifies that time has found his master. No one can formulate this time without becoming the contemporary of the fulfilled time, of Christ, his prophets and apostles. Consequently, the knowledge of fulfilled time is to be had not from a general notion of time but from this very event (p. 59).

2. This affirmation is also related to the resistance which man can offer to this act of divine sovereignty. The eon of sin is not a neutral time with respect to the new eon which succeeds it (p. 61). This is the time of resistance to sin, already defeated but still living, and in whose bosom the time of God cannot but be a scandal.

3. God, nevertheless, erupts in the heart of the ancient eon. This is the miracle of the particular intervention of God (p. 63-5).

The consequences of the determination and limitation of our time by the presence of fulfilled time are set forth in four propositions:

- "1. Fulfilled time takes the place of our non-genuine and improper time as genuine, proper time. What we mean when we say 'time' is real there. We thus have our real time not here but there. It is therefore not an edifying trick of thought, but the assimilation

of nourishment absolutely indispensable to our life, when Holy Scripture and the proclamation of its message call and transpose us from our own time away into that time, namely, into the time of Jesus Christ. There, and only there, is contemporaneity with Christ mediated to the Church by the witness of the prophets and apostles, do we really possess time. That time, its presence in the coming of the Kingdom and in the passing away of this world, is in truth our time, really presented to us in God's revelation (p. 66-7)."

- "2. The fulfillment of time by revelation means . . . that our own time . . . is taken from us (p. 67)."

3. Nevertheless, our time does not remain abolished. The fulfillment of time by Revelation only announces the imminence of that suppression. Our time and the time of God are in a state of tension (p. 67).

4. Consequently our time is limited to its duration (p. 68). In the presence of the message of Revelation, we understand that our time is withering and God approaches. We know that with respect to fulfilled time our time can only be that of the patience of God.

These views are developed in the two further sub-paragraphs, which are not germane to our discussion.

It is not our intent to study the Barthian idea of time in its entirety, but to point out difficulties that are virtually obvious. The principal difficulty is to determine how, with this approach, one can avoid coming to a most rigid, absolute type of "biblicism." If the time of Revelation does take the place of our time, if the time of fulfillment in Christ takes the place of our formless time, it would appear that the offered human testimony to Revelation can be in no other terms except those of Holy Scripture. There would appear to be no room for preaching dogma, theology. Even the simple commentary would no longer be possible. No doubt, for Barth, Scripture is not Revelation but only its witness, for-

mulated in very human terms, of prophets and apostles. But from the moment that this Revelation connotes a new time diverse from the time in which human history unfolds before and after Christ, it is impossible to see why terms other than those used by prophets and apostles would be necessary to render witness to Revelation. If divine Revelation is conceived as the executive act through which God has communicated Himself to the world in Jesus Christ—an act which has created a new time with no common measure with respect to the time of the fall—what is the point of preaching, of theological exposition, or commentary on Scripture? What value can they have, since all their specific substance, that which differentiates them from Scripture, is taken precisely from the sinful time considered abolished, at least in the hope of the time of God? Since divine actualism appears exclusively identified here with the Revelation of which the prophets and apostles are witness, it would appear that all other reality is stripped of theological value. It cannot but be an error and the illicit borrowing from the ancient eon of sin.

It would be fair to point out that the work of Barth itself is something quite different from a reprint of Scripture, that on the contrary all of his works are marked by an actual awareness (memorably, his opposition to Nazi Germany) quite different from the divine statism discussed in the preceding paragraphs.

Yet this problem deals not with the spirit or all the works of Barth, but with their peculiar theological foundation. The problem is to determine whether Barth's notion of divine history does not make all other and later history, vain and illusory: with what right, limiting all Revelation to Scripture, it can authorize terms other than those of Scripture; how it can come to certain

of its conclusions without being incoherent.

Barth has never felt or recognized this problem. He does not deal with it.

b. Bultmann

Bultmann's merit, increasingly acknowledged, lies in his having perceived that the problem was unavoidable. Scripture cannot be interpreted—explaining its terms by other terms, borrowed from different books or proceeding from other events than those of Scripture—without taking into account the necessity of this modification of terms.

For Bultmann (and Gogarten follows him here), man is a historical (*geschichtlich*) being who has his own history and who can be touched by God only in his personal history. Whence the necessity of interpreting Scripture and formulating the content in such a way that its intelligibility be not misunderstood nor fixed in a biblical idiom. The task, then, would be to detach the permanent message from the New Testament *donnés* and to express it in terms of modern man. Actually, Bultmann goes further and considers the categories of modern science alone adequate for the comprehension of reality: the mythical categories of antiquity, in this respect, have failed. But this is a minor matter. Whether Bultmann is engaged in formulating the gospel in the categories of modern man or whether his intent is to express the gospel in categories in conformity with the authentic human condition, there is no doubt that his approach offers no evidence of respecting the message. If, in fact, the content of the message is completely determined by the categories of modern man, there is no way of maintaining the otherness, the newness of the Christian message. Jaspers' criticism at this point is telling: Bultmann has not drawn all the necessary conclusions, regardless of his per-

sonal intention. It is not much to claim that the gospel can fecundate human life only to the extent that it furthers an analysis of self based on other cultural experiences. Bultmann has stopped at a halfway point and men like F. Buri have drawn the real consequences of his thought.

How would Jaspers be refuted? Although he may not wish it, and defends himself from it, Bultmann ends up by annulling the specific character of the gospel message itself.

c. The Two Impasses of Pure Actualism

Here again, dialectic theology culminates in an impasse. With Barth, the affirmation of the divine unique action in Jesus Christ could not demonstrate the need of a specific preaching, a specific dogma to be elaborated with respect to Scripture. With Bultmann, on the other hand, though again the divine unique action of God through which man comprehends Jesus Christ is affirmed, no account can be given of a specific quality of Scripture with respect to an interpretation that would make Scripture not only comprehensible but living for men.

With respect to the first difficulty, it has been argued that it is not grave. Barth, no doubt, has not elaborated theoretically on the relationship of preaching to Scripture. But what is that, after all, since in practice he does preach, does explain Scripture, and demonstrates by his actions that there is no impasse? Isn't all this questioning small, academic, contrasted to the vivifying influence of Barth on his contemporaries?

The objection is not entirely to the point. Barth himself stresses that the function of theology is to submit preaching to the criterion of Scripture. How can this function be performed if there is no theological distinction between

preaching and Scripture? And on what would the distinction be based if not on the difference, theologically justified, between the prophetic apostolic testimony of former times and post-apostolic preaching? And how is this difference to be established, if "our time" is denied a positive and specific role in the act by which God reveals Himself to us in the present? Moreover, if preaching is only the repetition of the prophetic apostolic message, why does it differ from the biblical propositions? Why isn't it all the same as the reading of the written word?

The same can be said of the possibility of a theological function and of a dialogic theology within the Church. No dialogue is then possible. When theologically no distinction can be drawn between Scripture and preaching theology itself is preaching, and the only dialogic theology possible is a clash of monadic preachings.

If we consider our time of no importance, the time in which specific traits distinguish and establish a difference between Scripture and preaching, what can we say of monadic preaching?

3. The Task

a. Seeking the Reason for the Impasse

THE REASONS for the impasse are traceable to the unilateral option of all dialectic theology. If Revelation is conceived only as a divine act, this act can be the act of God in the unique and definite epiphany of Christ, or the act of God in the actual revelation of this epiphany. But these two acts cannot be joined, since nothing connects them. It is therefore necessary to absorb the *hic et nunc* of man in the presence of Revelation in the *illic et tunc* of this very Revelation, or resolve the problem by dissolving, as does Bultmann, the *illic et tunc* of divine Revelation in the *hic*

et nunc of man in the presence of actual Revelation.

The reasons for the impasse are not difficult to see. An act is necessarily present. Either the definitive manifestation of Jesus Christ is this present, negating all other forms of the present, or the manifestation occurs in "my" present, but then it is my present which takes the place of His. In either case the time of Revelation is instantaneous. In either case, the category of duration has no theological meaning.

The point is to understand if the Christian event is or is not to be found in temporal duration. Dialectic theology denies the possibility, since it considers the only real time either the time of Christ or the time in which I come to know Christ. In neither case is there authentic duration. Yet, for all of this, the problem remains: can the Christian reality be inscribed in duration? Has there been a delay of parousia and a continuation of time such as there was before?

If one objected that although the Parousia had not come about time had nonetheless radically altered for all of that, then proof would be required to show how this modification had changed the structure of time. This proof cannot be adduced. Its unsurmountable difficulty is that the manifestation of Christ is something of the past (*sub Pontio Pilato*) and that it is on the basis of this past event that one can speak of the future and eschatology and not the reverse.

Since the manifestation of Christ is inscribed in a non-modified temporal duration, two consequences follow: the act of God in Jesus Christ, *passus sub Pontio Pilato*, is an act of the past. It no longer exists as such except under the form of the document, of the given, of the attestation, the written trial which history narrates. On the other hand, if the act of God in Jesus Christ becomes

present, this present will necessarily consist in an actualization of this past on the basis of a document, of a unique and definitive document of the past.

Pure actualism, then, cannot explain the Christian fact. The unique and definitive act of Jesus Christ is past, and now his presence can consist only in the actualization of that past, an actualization made possible by the illumination of Scripture by the Holy Ghost.

The impasse at which dialectic theology arrives is the necessary consequence of not distinguishing in the plenitude of the Christian reality between a deposit to be actualized and the actualization itself. The very term "deposit" is not considered by dialectic theology as susceptible of theological use, so that the problem of the modality of transmission of the "tradition" of the gospel from the time of the apostles up to our own times is considered only as a category of the act. In this approach, the given, the deposit, the document, do not play a specific role in the witnessing of Christ.

Dialectic theology, therefore, cannot recognize the importance of the *illic et tunc* without falling into the narrowest biblical fundamentalism; and it cannot deal seriously with the *hic et nunc* without lapsing into modernism.

b. The Task is the Study of Tradition

"Tradition" is a theological reality. It is manifested in the decisive event of the manifestation of Jesus Christ, in which all of God's revelation is contained, and the actualization of this revelation through preaching and the administration of the sacraments. *Traditum* and *actus tradendi*. A number of problems derive from the consideration of these truths:

1. How is Scripture actualized, and how does the Holy Ghost illuminate

its meaning? Why are the propositions of preaching not identical with those in Scripture? Of what does the illumination of the letter of Scripture (dead by itself), by the action of the Holy Spirit, consist? What is to be said of past actualization of the preaching of the Church, actualizations that have assumed a documentary form and which the Holy Ghost illuminates?

2. How can Scripture be considered the sovereign reference of successive actualizations which are not identical to it? Assuming that the Holy Ghost actualizes preaching, by what means is this actualization referred to the deposit of Scripture, the only sovereign and canonical reference?

To ask such questions is not to deny the legitimacy of the investigations of dialectic theology. Quite the contrary. The first order of questions deals with the problems suggested by Bultmann, the second by Barth. But the two concerns of theological actualism become now placed in a vaster setting, where actualism is only one pole of Christian reality, the other being the existence of a unique Scriptural deposit known by a means other than actualization.

In other terms, the problem is to examine how actualizing hermeneutics and the historical exegesis of Scripture are reconciled. This task involves a much more dialectic notion of the Christian fact, which by contrast makes dialectic theology appear monistic. But since the Parousia has not yet occurred, since the time of theology is the time of the Church between Ascension and Parousia, since time has continued after the definitive manifestation of Christ, since Christ reveals Himself by the Holy Ghost without Scripture thereby becoming per-

ishable, how could the Christian reality be grasped in other than dialectic terms? Is it possible that the temporal dialectic between the time in which Christ has appeared and that in which he reveals Himself to the future generations will not be based on the structure and method of theology?

These problems lie beyond the confines of these reflections. Sufficient that the problems be felt. Dialectic theology has attacked successfully the historicism of liberal theology, but as usual this reaction veered to one absolute pole. If Protestantism is to remain faithful to its vocation, the demonstration that Scripture is the perpetual rule of preaching and of the life of the Church, it cannot confine itself to historicism or a polarized actualism. It will have to make the difficult effort of realizing that if all Revelation has been given to us in Christ and is consigned in Scripture, the Holy Ghost is at work transforming a past into a present. Protestantism must show how historical exegesis and the actualizing hermeneutics of preaching complement one another, how existential knowledge finds its criterion in objective historical knowledge which in turn calls for an existential knowledge.

The task is urgent. Protestantism cannot refute the Catholic notion of tradition without demonstrating that it is possible to refute it without falling into modernism or fundamentalism or illuminism. If Protestantism is to remain faithful to its doctrine of *sola scriptura*, if it is to avoid becoming a religion of the letter or a philosophy of the arbitrary, this is its task.

Translated by SERGE HUGHES

THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE SPANISH PEOPLE

PEDRO LAIN ENTRALGO

THE LEAST treatment of the subject of this essay forces us to clarify, even if briefly, three preliminary questions: 1) what do we understand by "spirituality"? 2) the problem, at once sociological and historical, of a special national spirituality, and 3) our personal attitude towards this subject.

I. What is this "spirituality"? Two texts, one by Jacques Maritain, the other by Schopenhauer, will show us the limits within which our thought shall move.

In the opening pages of his beautiful book, *Les degrés du savoir*, the French thinker remarks that we "hear the cry, 'Spirit, spirituality!' But, what spirit do you invoke? If it is not the Holy Spirit, you might as well call upon the spirit of wood or the spirit of wine." Maritain's witty remark has primarily a contemporary and controversial significance, in relation to the abuse of the word "esprit" in pre-war France. But taking the text literally, does it not carry an excessive, perhaps exclusive, supernaturalization of the concept of spirituality?

It is true that for the Christian the supernatural spirituality of the Holy Spirit ought to be the final end and supreme crown of all possible human spirituality. Nevertheless, this truth does not exclude, on the contrary, it supposes, the existence of a "natural spir-

ituality" in the being and the behavior of man. The first danger is the tendency not to see in "spirit" anything but a concept relating to the supernatural life.

A little over one hundred years ago, confronting the oceanic vagueness with which German idealism had used the word "Geist," "spirit," Schopenhauer for his part wrote, "Geist, Wer ist denn der Bursche?"—"Spirit? Who is that youth?" Like Maritain's, these words of the anti-professorial philosopher have a value very much conditioned by the circumstances under which they were written. They were directed, as we know, against the radical hostility of Klages to spirit, in the name of life. But Schopenhauer's text can also be understood literally. And whoever does so will be led to think that the human mind does not take into account the possibility of knowing what to rely on as to the meaning of "spirit" and what it signifies both in reality and in man's activity. The second danger is agnosticism with respect to the human reality of spirit, or, to carry things to the extreme, open hostility.

II. To what extent and in what way can we properly speak of a special national spirituality—in this case, of Spain's? There are also two opposed and extreme positions on this question. Those schooled in the romanticist doctrine of the "Volksgeist" or "spirit of the people" (and there have been not a few from Romanticism to the present) were in the habit of reifying excessively the valid hypothesis of various national peculiarities. Opposed to these, the protagonists and supporters of cosmopolitanism have undervalued or refused to recognize, even abusively, anything that differentiated each people or nation from the rest.

The following essay represents one of the concluding chapters of Dr. Lain Entralgo's *ESPAA COMO PROBLEMA*, one of the most interesting recent examples of Spanish intellectual and cultural self-examination. *CROSS CURRENTS* previously published Dr. Lain Entralgo's "A Theory of the Catholic Intellectual."

Between these excesses, it is necessary to insist on the reality of diverse national peculiarities. But that reality is not substantive; rather, it is contingent and habitual, belonging to what traditional philosophy calls the "second nature" of man. This means that everything, or almost everything, that makes up a national peculiarity has been acquired historically and can be lost historically by the nation that exhibits it. And, for another thing, it means that the diversely integrating customs of each national peculiarity can be observed, in principle, in the life of any other people, and the more so when the historical destinies of both are found to be closely related. The specific difference of a people refers to the total style of its life and its history, not to the nature of the elements that compose the specific difference.

III. In the following pages, I shall always use the word "spirituality" in a sense which is merely descriptive, and for that reason pre-ontological. Let me explain.

By a requirement rooted in its very constitution, the life of man, whether considered in its totality or understood from the point of view of the situations in which it reveals itself to us as "authentic existence,"¹ is oriented, of necessity, towards a term of reference which is strictly transmundane, transcending the world and life itself. The nature of that term of reference and the form of the relationship between it and human existence constitute, strictly speaking, each man's own "feeling" about living. And this is so even when a man devotes himself to "living his own life," that is, when he endeavors to exist according to the manner that the theologians call "the pride of life" (*superbia vitae*).

Therefore in what follows we shall call "natural spirituality" the act and the manner—conscious and deliberate or

not—of directing and ordering life towards that core, transcendent to it, which gives it in each case its final meaning. For Christians, such a term of reference is the one and triune God; for others, the vague Divinity which deism postulates or admits; for some, the metaphysical unity of a universe pantheistically conceived. George Simmel could truly say that the life of man is always "mehr als Leben," "more than life." Each individual human life depends, finally, on something which transcends it. At least when man does not persist in destroying his manhood, to use once more Quevedo's vigorous and happy expression.

Thus understood, the natural spirituality of a man or of a people attains real concretion according to five principal determining circumstances:

1. The native disposition of the people or of the man in question. Race, temperament, sex, and predominant physique help qualify it. No matter how removed we may be from "racialism," we can not deny the importance of race in respect to what I have been calling "natural spirituality."
2. History, in so far as it determines the circumstances in which man lives. We all are, as they say, "sons of a past," even if such a relationship never becomes absolute determinism.
3. The social structure to which the man or the group of men belongs. The partial reasonableness of those who try to understand man according to the "social class" in which he lives comes in here.
4. Free will. Man is constitutionally free and that liberty of his expresses itself, above all, in the fact that his mode of living and of being is never totally and absolutely determined by his biology, his history, and his social position. The free will of individual men and of human groups essentially influences

—and at times decides—the form of his natural spirituality.

5. Divine Providence. Biology, history, social position and liberty are, finally, arranged within a totality to which students of history usually refer when they speak of the "meaning of Universal History." Such is the natural place, if we can speak of it thus, of what we Christians call "Providence."

I think that we can now ask ourselves with some precision about the spirituality of the Spanish people.

FOUR COORDINATES

A LITTLE OVER thirty-five years ago, in the solemn shadow of El Escorial, Ortega y Gasset wrote, as the innermost key of his *Meditaciones del Quijote*, "My God, what is Spain? In the breadth of the world, in the midst of the innumerable races, lost between boundless yesterdays and endless tomorrows, under the immense and cosmic coldness of the blinking heavens, what is this Spain, this spiritual promontory of Europe, this prow, as it were, of the continental soul?" These noble words of our great thinker are coming to be the expression of a feeling common to many of the best Spanish souls for no less than seventy-five years. The most significant aspect of our intellectual history is, I believe, that painful and unceasing effort to attain a satisfactory definition of the historical being of Spain, or, at least, a well-informed and profound interpretation of it. A few names, arranged according to the chronology of their particular hermeneutic essays, will give superabundant proof of what I say: Menéndez Pelayo, Unamuno, Ganivet, Maetzu, Ortega y Gasset, Giménez Caballero, Menéndez Pidal, Américo Castro.

My own response—a response which I hasten to assert is provisional, sche-

matic, incomplete, bold, and consequently, very much controversial—does not endeavor to solve so difficult a problem. It will scarcely allude, except lightly and fleetingly, to the significance which the periods of Spanish history subsequent to our Middle Ages have in the history of the modern world. Instead it will be limited to showing according to some main coordinates—four—the manner in which Spaniards, taken as a whole, have been accustomed to orient themselves both in words and deeds in respect to the transmundane end of ordination and reference which we know to be inevitable for the existence of man. I believe, in fact, that the spirituality of the Spanish people, conceived according to the preceding exposition, cannot be understood without considering the following four great modes of expression:

1. The installation of the Spaniard in the temporality of human existence, his relationship with time.
2. The attitude of the Spaniard confronting his own personal reality, and the reality of all other persons.
3. The habitual presence of death—an intestinal presence, as we already know—in the vital acts of the Spaniard.
4. The intense Spanish awareness of sensory reality.

A careful study of the expression of each one of the preceding heads—which are just so many more lines of expression of what I previously called the "authenticity of existence"—would require, in order to obtain conclusions that would be fairly tentative, the presentation, analysis, and comparison of a great number of documents of every type: literary, religious, legal, artistic, and those concerning exploits and customs. None of this will be possible. I shall have to limit myself, inexorably, to the statement of some few theses and to the explanation of each of them by means of some significant testimony.

The Spaniard in Time

The temporality of human existence reveals itself, provisionally, in the fact that such existence cannot be known without relating it to the three fundamental ecstasies of temporal being: the past, the present, and the future. The present of existence—or rather the succession of its “presents”—brings back to the present in some manner (remembering or forgetting) its own past; and in the form of plan and expectancy, pre-contains in some manner its own future. Hence it is that the attitude of a man confronting the temporality of his own existence carries with it, tacitly and clearly, with warning or without it, a consideration of the totality of existence; and it is for that reason that the study of the installation of man in temporality—his manner of remembering and forgetting, his manner of planning and expecting—is unavoidable for the intellection of his natural spirituality.²

How and what does the Spaniard remember and forget; how and what does he plan and expect? For what pertains to the second part of the question, the deepest and most comprehensive analysis is, without a doubt, that of Américo Castro in his recent book, *España en su historia*, which is fundamental if we are to understand not a few of the intimate keys to the Spanish people. Castro asserts that the genuine Spaniard is distinguished from all other men in Europe by the believing installation of his whole existence in the “eager hope of rising to summits and destinies prefigured in the very belief,” whether this belief be relative to the Divinity or merely human. The concrete mode of that very decisive installation of the Spaniards in belief and in hope would offer, however, two different forms:

1. The integral or plenary form. Belief is, in this case, firm, absolute, without a trace of uncertainty. Only its total

realization appears to demand of the present the fulfillment of one condition which is more or less difficult, but always humanly attainable. Let us look at an example in the impressive verses of Fray Diego de Valencia, one of the poets of the *Cancionero de Baena*. If the Castilian people, scattered at that time, would come to an understanding,

I know not in the world one solitary corner
That, with all Granada, they would not conquer.

2. The deficient or uncertain form. The Spaniard now feels “insecurity about the promise which is implicit in the belief.” Such seems to have been the form of the Hispanicity of Unamuno and, for what concerns his political and earthly existence, of Quevedo. Hence the doubly agonized and sorrowful nature of the lives of these two men—lives related and reduced to insecurity in a constant and unavoidable manner. Such an essential agony of existence does not at all deprive him who feels it of his capacity for creation; but—as it occurs in Quevedo and Unamuno—that insecurity lends to the created work a good part of its most intimate and distinguishing qualities.

Nevertheless, whether the security of what the belief promises be full or deficient, that fundamental installation of life in hope would hinder *a radice* the reliance of being on present reality; or, if we wish, its occasional repose in the present reality. In the intellectual order, the construction of a theory of reality would not be possible, which always appears before Hispanic eyes—Castro holds—from the point of view of its eschatology; more, therefore, according to what “can be” rather than according to what “is.” In the operative order, reality is not subjected by man to a competent technical control, through formulas, procedures and instruments. “The reality

of the present, a present always perceived as having been excavated from its temporal foundations, as invertebrate, cannot be other—writes Castro—than a re-creation, as if the world began in each instant, in a structural, functional, creating-destroying continuous process."

The believing habitual installation of the Spanish man in hope cannot explain all the possibilities of the individuality of Hispanic life; but that valuable interpretative key makes it possible to understand and clarify, I believe, many of the hidden aspects of our historical existence. Nietzsche wrote that the principal characteristic of the history of Spain consists in "having desired too much." In other words, that the Spaniards have always found themselves disposed to want everything that their hope would show to be possible. And the keen André Gide wrote in his *Journal*, after seeing three words—"Sala de Espera"³—written on the wall of a railroad station in Spanish Morocco: *Quelle belle langue que celle qui confond l'attente et l'espoir!*⁴ The judgment of the clever Parisian aesthete is not philologically correct, because in Spanish we distinguish "waiting" (*attente*) from "hope" (*espoir, espérance*); but his aesthetic and psychological exactness is, without a doubt, undeniable and profound.

In the same hermeneutic line we must place, for judgment, the peculiar attitude of the Spaniard in the face of his own past. What and how does the Spaniard remember? The disorderly tendency of the man of Iberia toward the destruction of his archives, the frequency with which we fail to recognize the fate of illustrious and even glorious mortal remains, and the uncertain and ignorant situation in which, at the end of a century and a half of universal historicism we still find ourselves confronting many important events of our past, doubtless do not constitute unconnected and un-

fortunate facts. Hence it is that among us tradition has to be, more than a pure remembrance which is always actualized, the non-acceptance of the present, for the hope of a future more or less timeless.

Whence proceeds this colossal importance of hope in the historical and everyday existence of the Spaniard? Castro, to whose book I return, points out two fundamental reasons: the relative spiritual semitization of the Spaniard during the medieval centuries and the fact that the Spanish nationality should have been formed by means of a military undertaking lasting seven centuries, called the "Reconquista." This second reason seems to me much more important and demonstrable than the penetration of the semitic mentality in the Castille of the Middle Ages. Spain was built across seven centuries of collective life, expanded towards a future at the same time inspiring and concrete, delightful and imaginable. Such an extended period of "life in hope" would have been decisive for the configuration of the historical and individual customs of the Spanish man; and, therefore, would also have decisively given its own style to every subsequent chapter in our history.

The Personal Reality

Two structural moments, essentially united one to the other, but very clearly discernible, integrate the personal individuality of a man: what that man "does" and what that man "is," his *activity* and his *entity*. The personal action is made up, strictly speaking, of original creations (Cervantes is the creator of *Quijote*) and by originality in copying, deliberate or not, of what others have done (Cervantes, an original realizer of some canons of the Italian Renaissance). The personal entity of each man is in its turn made up of the metaphysical and individual substratum of its own existence. And we would say

that Spanish personalism rests more firmly and decisively on the entity of the person than on the activity in which that entity is fulfilled and manifested.

I must explain myself. I do not maintain in what I have said that the Spaniard is an inactive and inoperative man; I do not propose to uphold anew, with more pedantic words, the well-known thesis of Spanish *accidia*. There is nothing further from the historical truth, and even from the everyday scene. When the Spaniard has been moved by his own hope, his activity *ad extra* has been literally fabulous: there is our history, from Covadonga to Rocroy; there is the daily existence of our farmers and handicraftsmen. What I want to say now is that when he is in the critical moment of choosing, the Spaniard has usually placed more importance in what he "is" than in what he "does." Or, in other words, since man's existence is essentially projective: more what he believes himself capable of being in this world and in the next, than what he successfully does and will do in this world. For that reason, unlike what usually happens with other human historical types, more attentive to the operation of their personality than to the entity of their person, the Spaniard has never been more strongly or intimately proud than when he knew himself to be defeated, when his free "effective" activity remained limited, from outside himself, by the commanding activity of whoever conquered him. In that lies one of the secret keys to our history, starting from the Peace of Westphalia.

Hence the peculiarity of the highly praised and denigrated individualism of the Spaniards; that radical, metaphysical individualism, to which already on the eve of the defeat of Spain by the modern world, two verses of Quevedo give so dramatic and crowning an expression:

Live for yourself alone, if you can,
For only for yourself, if you do, will you die.

Hence also the fundamentally personalist nature of Spanish mysticism, always so far removed from any pantheism. And when the disposition of the soul is no longer that of faith, but doubt, we have the final meaning of these words of Unamuno, so eloquent and definitive, in his book *The Tragic Sense of Life* (*Del sentimiento trágico de la vida*): "And they come wanting to deceive us with a deceit of deceits, and they tell us nothing becomes lost, everything becomes transformed, moves, and changes, that neither the smallest piece of matter is annihilated, nor does the least little blow of force wholly weaken, and there are some who endeavor to console us with this. Poor consolation! I worry neither about my matter nor about my force, for they are not mine while I myself am not mine, that is, eternal. No, it is not to sink into the great All, into the infinite and eternal Matter and Force, or in God, which I desire; it is not to be possessed by God but rather to possess Him, to make myself God without ceasing to be the 'I' who am now telling you this. Deceits of monism are of no use to us; we want the substance and not the shadow of immortality." Really, this is the ultimate metaphysical and theological meaning of what the Spanish populace affirm when they say that "Each one is each one."

From this point of view the nature of the Spanish relation between one person and another can also be properly understood. Among us more ethical value is given to the relationship with a man based on what that man "is"—that is to say, on what one thinks he is, since the ultimate being of a man is inaccessible except by way of belief, of confidence—than to a relationship which depends

merely on what that man "does." When the Spaniard thinks that someone is "a good person at heart," as we usually say, the most villainous visible actions of the individual are almost always a very small obstacle to a mutual friendship.

I think that the relatively singular character of Spanish political coexistence must be rooted in this. It is not necessary to recall the example of the *fides celtiberica* that Valerius Maximus described to the Romans. The behavior of the Spaniards—of the "Spaniards," not the "Iberians"—is more clearly shown in regard to the modern State, of which, it seems, they were the most prominent inventors. But the modern State can be one of two distinct things, or both at the same time: a formula for coexistence in the present, or an instrument of an undertaking projected towards the future and alternately achieved and hoped for. I hold it to be certain that the attempts of the Spaniards to establish a State based on pure political and social coexistence—in other words, much more dependent on what men do than on what they are—have not been very fortunate among us. The effective and harmonious coexistence of the Spaniards cannot be well sustained except by a common undertaking and hope, because then, if I may so put it, the persons are within what they hope they can be, and not merely what they are being in the pure and current present. This is a serious problem, which here I can only state hurriedly.

The Presence of Death

The modern world, conqueror of Spain in the seventeenth century, has been resolutely avoiding death; it has fled death, it has not wanted to think of it, it has looked at human existence according to what this existence can do in life (think, enjoy, dominate the world), and not according to the incon-

trovertible conviction of its essential subjection to death.⁵ If you do not think so, read Descartes, the great patriarch of modernity. And, if a modern thinks of death, he will do it as Montaigne does, because that meditation is a resource *qui fournit nostre vie d'une molle tranquillité et nous en donne le goust pur et aimable; sans qui toute autre volupté est esteincte*⁶.

Spain, I repeat, is a people conquered by the modern world. Besides settling into decadence in the seventeenth century, it fell in defeat. It did not fail then by internal insufficiency; it fell conquered by a power external to it. Westphalia and Rocroy are the two names which best express our downfall. But, do not the discovery and huge vogue of the subject of death, for several decades now, constitute in their turn a sign of the internal crisis of the modern world and a pledge of the profound possibilities of present-day Spain?

Contemporary thought—I have deliberately not said "modern"—has discovered the inexorable presence of death in the very bosom of human life. The psychoanalysts, for whom the life of man is interpretable behavior, have shown that this life harbors in its inmost recesses, unavoidably, a death instinct. Let us be satisfied with this assertion, without going into the interpretations of the schools. For their part, the existentialists, in whose eyes human life is, above all, understandable self-experience, have made us aware that a certain prescience of death itself belongs essentially in the very structure of the human act par excellence: design. Does not all of this suppose, at the very best, a secret revitalization of dead Spain, Spain conquered and isolated by the modern world? For certainly the subject of death has been unceasingly present in all the forms of expression of Spanish life from lyric poetry to every-

day and familiar customs. In order to show this it is not necessary to go back as far as Seneca, who would raise for us the problem of whether the Iberians were Spaniards in the strict sense of the word. From the Romancero and Jorge Manrique to Ortega y Gasset, continuing unmistakably through Santa Teresa, Quevedo and Unamuno, the *praemeditatio mortis*—or at least the *visio mortis*—has been the ink in which the most revealing Spanish pens were constantly dipped. I can not now weave an anthology of conclusive texts. That would be an easy undertaking. I shall limit myself to copying several lines from Ortega, one of the Spaniards in whose literary works the will and joy of living throb most deeply and urgently. Now then: so prominent and celebrated a dedication to life does not prevent Ortega, a subtle Iberian and a European, from writing in *Ideas de los Castillos*, as he considers the death-fleeing and hedonistic ethics of the modern world: "The morality of modernity has cultivated an arbitrary oversentimentality, in virtue of which everything would be preferable to dying. . . . It seems a greater human dignity to make use of the fact and the power that death is, using it under the direction of the will. This would be a better morality to teach the man who possesses life, in order to explain it sensibly." Here speaks, it is true, a man of the "twentieth century" vitally and necessarily making judgment against "modern" man; but it is also a Spaniard speaking—by history, by temperament, or because of both—a man for whom intimate conversation or a subconscious contact with the truth of dying has not failed to be habitual. Ortega himself told us that in contrast with a "blond German, meditative and sentimental," he is, in his soul, an "Iberian with his rough, bristly passions." Yes, and also with his death-laden, tragic history, only spotted by modernity.

Tragic, I have said. At the end of his essay, *Wie erfasst man einen Nationalcharakter?*, Spranger wrote, "The richest image of a people is revealed in its great tragic poetry, and nowhere else with so much purity and profundity. If a people is no longer capable of illuminating a great tragedy from its most intimate innermost recesses, it should be feared that in those ultimate profundities something is broken. Heroic action and heroic passion correspond mutually. The result is always the tragic. Tell me, O Nations, what you have lived as tragic, and how you have endured it; show me what part of it you have been able to fashion as tragedy, and I shall tell you what you are!" But it happens that Spain has not been a country creating true written tragedies; neither Lope nor Calderon composed them. Perhaps the Duke of Rivas comes near it, but in no case does he come up to being a "tragedian" in the manner of Sophocles, Shakespeare, and, to a certain extent, Schiller. Then must we conclude that from its birth in historical life "there is something broken" in the ultimate depths of Spain?

Even accepting Spranger's thesis, the truth is otherwise. There are at least two ways of understanding "the tragic." According to one—strictly literary—tragedy is the scenic depiction of the lethal danger which marks for human existence the transition from an exclusive rest in traditional belief to the desire of being governed only by its own naked reason. This is the meaning of the work of Sophocles in historical Greek life, and the significance of Shakespeare's in historical European life. But according to another meaning, more extensive and no less accurate, a human action is tragic when its author performs it deliberately, assuming in it constantly the possibility of dying. Thus Spain is tragic, and so has it been. The history of Spain viewed as a whole—Reconquista, Amer-

ica, Counter Reformation, War of Independence, civil wars—is nothing other than a particular way of revealing the naturally tragic condition of human existence when it is obliged or feels called upon to live in an authentic fashion and in “limited conditions”: situations in which throbs the possibility of death, more or less consciously perceived. The Spanish seriousness, the vital temperament of the nobleman, the idea that the line of a human life can be upright only “when it passes amidst the stars,” and the superiority of our moral virtues (so often commented upon by the well-informed) over our aesthetic and intellectual virtues are, I believe, so many other modes of existing on earth “using death under the government of the will” to express it in Ortega’s splendid phrase. The nobleman, the great creation of Spain, lives as our poet and leader Francisco de Aldana said he wanted to live:

without death being an obstruction to the eye;

that is, tragically. Thus do the determined and accepting eyes which form ranks in the *Entierro del Conde de Orgaz* look at the world; thus, in their fashion, do those which shine like black stars from so many of Goya’s canvases.

Perceptible Reality

The habitual attitude of the Spaniard confronting the reality of the world is at the same time substantive and sensorial. In addition to the very certain fact that the Spaniard is accustomed to exist in reality according to the hope he has in it—in other words: according to what that reality “can be,” not according to what “it is” at any particular moment—we must bring into harmony another fact which is no less certain: the vehement and unrestrained tendency of the Hispanic man to exercise his cor-

poreal senses, even in the face of realities which can be neither seen nor heard. Because of that I have spoken of an attitude which is at the same time “sensorial” and “substantive” before the world, and for that reason it was possible to establish in an appropriate thesis the famous Spanish “realism.”

Natural and visible beings can be many different things for man. At the least, they can be the following: specific and individual concretions of a principle of reality which is fertile, efficacious and immanent in them (as they were for the ancient Greeks *in genere*); material realizations of an archetypal idea (as they were for the Neoplatonic artists of the High Renaissance); perceptible symbols of a world beyond which is invisible in itself (as Bosco saw them, to cite only his example); objects which instigate an intellectual and technical analysis (such is the case of the modern physicist); and, finally, individual disengaged substances which speak to all the senses, especially to sight and touch, for the joyful exercise of these senses.

I hold it to be certain that this last is the manner in which the Spaniard usually considers the reality of the visible world, and this is also the root of the cognitive habit which Unamuno called the “realism of actions taken in the rough.” For the purpose of illustrating my assertion, here are, in an unconnected series, several notes descriptive of Spanish life:

1. The surprising penetration of the term “substance” and its derivatives in the language of the people. Chicken broth is for the Spaniard “chicken substance”; we apply the term “substantial” sauce to one which preserves the virtues and principles of its ingredients in concentrated form, and even more so when the ingredients are culinarily noble; all of us try to distinguish from the rest the “substantial” man or the man “of

substance," and our populace under-values, with much reason, the men it calls "unsubstantial"; to "substantiate" a judicial action is to define its essential parts with care and ability, to prepare the action for judgment; "in substance" is among us a phrase equivalent to "in brief." The examples could be multiplied. It can readily be seen that the Spanish people is the most "substantialist" of all Europeans, the most inclined to see and understand things as firm and substantial realities.

There is at work, certainly, in the soul of the Spaniards a strong habitual tendency to reify or to substantivize essences. Can there be in this a remote national acknowledgement of the Suarezian thesis denying a real distinction between essence and existence?

2. The appearance, not only "personal" but also richly "sensorial," of Spanish plastic creations, and even of literary works, when they represent the human figure. We have only to compare *in mente* the work of our Castilian and Andalusian artists of the sixteenth century with the sculpture of the Italian Renaissance to observe the meaning and the truth of my affirmation.

3. The sensorial emphasis, if I may so express it, of colloquial Spanish. Local expressions such as "I saw it with my own eyes," or with greater reason "with these eyes which will eat up the earth"; sayings such as "it tastes bad to me," or "it smells bad to me"; a power of substantiation as vigorous and complex as that of the word "tangible"; here you have a few examples, easily multiplied, of the acknowledged Spanish tendency to live physically on sensorial experience. The intellectual subtlety of Bergson brought to notice the great number of abstract words (thought, spirit, etc.) which can be related etymologically and semantically to the very many other bodily activities. But the Spanish people

—with more intensity and frequency perhaps than other cultured nations—likes to express the less sensorial experiences of human spiritual life through verbal images which concern sense perception, or are related to it without any elaboration. Let us recall in this respect, the mystical terminology of Saint John of the Cross. Could anyone speak of "substantial words" who did not possess habitually the mentality which I have called sensorial and substantive?

4. The frequency with which, in colloquial Spanish, terms which originally had an abstract meaning acquire a very concrete and material meaning. The word "stuff" [*género*], coming no doubt from the scholastic verbal heap, signifies for the common people the effective reality of what can be sold in a shop; and the same can also be said about the term "existence" which was trivialized in its plural form ("*existencias*") by the Spanish merchants many decades before the European existentialists brought it into vogue.

5. The unconquerable inclination to transform the "news," whatever type it may be, to very concrete and exact "visions." Let us recall, for example, the corporeal bulk and the sensory precision of Quevedo's *Sueños*, or the imaginative attitude of Fray Luis de León and of Fray Luis de Granada before the longed-for reality of eternal beatitude. But perhaps there is no example of this Spanish tendency that is so beautiful and so convincing as the historic ballad in which the transfer of the Cid's corpse is described. He is going to be taken from Valencia to San Pedro de Cardena. Alvar Fáñez desires

that they place the dead body
in a closed coffin,
cover it with purple
and nail it with golden nails,

Jimena [the Cid's wife] opposes him
with these words:

The Cid has a beautiful countenance
and very elegant eyes;
while he is in this state
there is no reason why he should be
moved

for my sons-in-law will have
satisfaction,
and my daughters in their turn,
to see him as he is now
and not his body buried.

The information becomes more complete and final when it can be reduced to raw sensorial experience; and it turns out, for that reason, more satisfactory, although the event to which it refers may be sad or painful.

Conclusion and Self-criticism

Any real conclusion requires us to return in some manner to the beginning of what is to be concluded. This is what I wish to do now in mine. I intended to explain, though only very partially and schematically, the "natural spirituality" of the Spanish people. I shall not insist on how the question of the "natural" ought to be understood in this case. I shall only say that the four characteristics I described are just so many other forms of the ordination of existence to the transmundane center from which it receives its ultimate meaning. The fact that this center has almost always been among the Spaniards the one and triune God of Christianity does not constitute a necessity since here we are only speaking of a "natural" and "historical" spirituality; but neither is it an indifferent or unfortunate fact, since Christian and Catholic religiosity has to a very great extent contributed to the configuration of the habits of Spanish "natural spirituality."

Our historical existence is built on such habits, at least in its principal outlines. The effective manner in which Spaniards have expressed their faith in Divinity, or have made a science of the divine and of the human, or have created works of art which define them

better, or have coexisted politically, or have spread over the surface of the planet in the service of an historical enterprise or their own individual spirit of adventure, cannot be well understood, in my opinion, without taking into account these cardinal orientations of its second nature. But such an intellectual enterprise will be merely noted here.

Nevertheless, I ought to end by indicating the point of departure for a possible critique; or, rather, the possible starting point of a real self-criticism. Let this last point remain as two serious questions. Applying "Spanish" to the form of natural spirituality here described, will we find ourselves obliged to maintain that men born in Spain and educated there are not Spanish when their spiritual habits do not coincide with these characteristics? And, since a man who lives historically is always capable of innovation, will our grandchildren perhaps cease to be Spaniards, if, for whatever reason, they know how to stick more to the present than to the future, to what they do more than to what they are, to live "for life" more than to live "for death," more to abstract formula than to the sensorial and concrete reality? Let each one answer for himself.

Translated by MARÍA ELENA G. CARULLO

¹ I am obviously referring to Heidegger's distinction between "authentic existence" and "unauthentic" or "ordinary existence." Taken (as a whole) in its totality, all human existence is authentic.

² It must be remembered that the adjective "natural" calls for a fundamental consideration of "second nature" in this case. Otherwise one could scarcely speak licitly of a "natural spirituality."

³ Waiting Room.

⁴ What more beautiful tongue than that which confuses "waiting" and "hope."

⁵ Let the exception of romanticism be made there, without more qualifications.

⁶ which provides our life with a gentle tranquility and gives us a pure and lovable relish of it; without which all other pleasure is extinct.

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CHRISTIANS AND THE PREVENTION OF WAR IN THE ATOMIC AGE

An Ecumenical Inquiry by a Sub-Committee of the Ecumenical Studies Commission of the French Protestant Federation

Considering the formulation of the subject we have been asked to treat, the sub-committee is not concerned to pronounce on political, juridical, strategic or other problems which today—or tomorrow—may provide. We have nevertheless tried to inform ourselves as carefully as possible on such matters. Our conclusions, however, bear only on the following four points: I. the theological foundations for the Christian attitude to the subject of war; II. the ethical problems of the participation of Christians in war; III. in what way is the

current situation new?; IV. the role of the Churches.

I. THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

A. THE CHRISTIAN REVELATION denounces *the sources of conflict hidden in man himself*. We need mention only the power of the lie, which does not consist only in man's power to deceive his neighbor, but also to deceive himself. In this he preserves a good conscience even when he commits acts which he would disapprove of in another. Here we discover the reality and activity of a power of darkness, a Prince of this world, who always tries to pass unnoticed and who knows the natural man better than the latter knows himself.

Another source of conflict resides in the situation in which the creature lives. Cut off from his origins, desperately wounded ever since the fall, man has the confused—and sometimes agonized—sentiment of the vanity of all undertakings; in his lack of self-understanding, he accepts as a liberation any explanation of his suffering which does not make him guilty.

Thus man tries always to burden the other with everything that, in his own heart, makes life unbearable for him. All violence and conflict issue forth from this impure source, the troubled depths of fallen man.

But the Gospel also reveals that, in spite of his all-too-evident power, the Prince of this world has been vanquished. The liberating act accomplished by Jesus Christ is always recalled

The Ecumenical Studies Commission of the French Protestant Federation asked one of its sub-committees, under the guidance of Professor Etienne Trocmé, of the Faculty of Protestant Theology of Strasbourg, to prepare the report which we translate here. The sub-committee was made up of varied personalities—pastors, academicians, officers, chaplains, etc.—and thus represents an extremely broad sample of theological and political opinion.

In its meeting of May 24, 1958, the Council of the Protestant Federation of France received this report with gratitude. It decided to publish it and propose it for general study. The Committee for Ecumenical Studies, Protestant Federation of France (47, rue de Clichy, Paris 9e, France) will be grateful for comments, suggestions, and criticisms (which the editors of CROSS CURRENTS will be happy to forward). The report appeared in France in the valuable monthly CHRISTIANISME SOCIAL, 52 rue de Londres, Paris 8, \$4 a year.

anew to us by the Gospel, and urges us to repentance. This repentance today compels us to set ourselves the task of finding a way of obedience in the midst of today's conflicts; we must redefine the responsibilities of Christians in regard both to their own nations and to all mankind.

B. *The attitude of Christians to the subject of war is, in addition, dictated by the manner in which they understand the State.* Whatever its form, the State cannot constitute for Christian thought a simple, theologically indifferent fact. Its existence, the national plurality, the oppositions among nations which are its consequences, ought to remain serious problems for those who believe in the Lordship of Jesus Christ, the promise of the Kingdom of God, and the Reconciliation. The account of the Tower of Babel (*Genesis 11*) shows, moreover, that Israel, in spite of her special destiny, already encountered the same difficulties.

We will keep ourselves, therefore, from explaining the existence of the State too simply, and avoid discussing the national plurality and the divisions among nations in terms of some wise design of the Creator, or even by some mysterious dispensation of the God of Israel, whose purpose would be the protection and eschatological triumph of the chosen People. Inversely, let us also avoid accounting for these realities as simple consequences of sin, which would lead to expelling God from history, and to offering sacrifice either to a nationalism of despair, or to a utopian anarcho-internationalism. In face of these realities, Christians ought to give evidence of intellectual modesty. It is not up to them to explain the world, in which the consequences of sin and the action of God are for the moment inextricably mingled, but to live in it with their neighbors in a manner conforming to

the will of God, thanks to the "first-fruits of the Spirit."

A few reference points are nevertheless indispensable in order to orient our attitude toward the State and nations. The notion of the Lordship of Christ should furnish them. To say that "Christ is the Lord" is, in fact, not only to affirm His resurrection and His return at the end of time, but above all to describe the actual role of the Risen Christ in *political* terms. If it is not to be empty of meaning, this confession of faith signifies:

a) The only sacred power henceforth is that which the Risen Christ exercises; all human powers are thus radically desacralized, "laicized," secularized.

b) Until the final manifestation of the Lordship of Christ, the "nations" conserve a political organization, which, however secular it has become, draws its sole legitimacy from the fact that the King of the World temporarily assigns a place to it. The existence of this organization can have no other purpose than to permit the continuation of human history, through the preservation of communities adapted to the conditions of each age. But this work of conservation takes on a meaning in the eyes of the Christian, since it makes the preaching of the Gospel possible.

What will be the attitude of Christians to these States, which, although deprived of their supernatural halo, have nevertheless been given the right to exist by Jesus? The Churches have so often and sometimes so abusively preached docility to the "authorities," that today it is fashionable to do the opposite, and to call Christians to vigilance against power, in the defense of "the rights of God." We must have the courage to say that this trend too has its dangers. Certainly the Church must be a sentinel, and exhort believers to a reserve in regard to the State (and

even to certain forms of conscientious objection, in case of necessity), when the State rejects its *secular* vocation—that is to say, in placing itself in the service of a God, by favoring its own religion. But the Church cannot deny the autonomy of politics (*Mark* 12:13–17 is a reproof both to those who would impose the Law of God on the State, and those who would place submission to the authorities before audience to God). It is necessary to replace the fine old appeals to submission and the simplist appeals to revolt with a teaching destined to guide Christians over difficult paths where they must walk as adult citizens of a modern state.

What God asks of Christians is to discern realistically what the State needs to fulfill its mission, and then to bring to it their personal contribution, which will also be secular. In other words, the Christian today ought in conscience to get initiated in politics, and play his role in it—just as a non-Christian would. It is obvious that this attitude, although preferable to the evasions of either abstention or me-too-ism, will involve him in numerous difficulties. Hence it is necessary that the Church, by exposing clearly to its members the duties which solidarity with their national community imposes on them, give them the taste for a life of free men, responsible for the defense of justice and liberty within the framework of public institutions.

II. THE ETHICAL PROBLEM

CALLED FIRST OF ALL to love, then summoned to enter politics, the Christian finds himself in a delicate moral position. In effect, the State defends order and justice; in order to do this, it employs constraint. As citizen, the Christian allows the collectivity to utilize in his name means that he would not be able to allow in his personal life; as

functionary, he will have recourse to these means if he judges them indispensable or if he receives an order. The Christian life is then *torn between two ethical standards*, whose co-existence is as scandalous as that of the Lordship of Christ with human States.

The conflict of the ethics of Love and that of Justice is most often masked: the Christian is somewhat lukewarm in loving his brothers and his enemies; the State defends order and justice with a certain laxity. The one places in practice a bit more than the Decalogue; the other, a bit less; for most men, the difference is not very obvious. The split between them becomes clear when a political or economic crisis breaks out; then many, if not all, Christians are confronted with unhappy choices, if they take their vocation as disciples seriously. It is in these circumstances that their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ will be placed to the test, since He commands them to love, but also to preserve a provisional political order, in which constraint rules and from which they cannot abstain. This faith will prove its solidity if it leads them, not to a common attitude which would surely be inconceivable, but to a personal obedience and to a renewal of prayer for the coming of God's Kingdom.

The opposition between the requirements of love and those of political order are displayed with the sharpest clarity in the case of war. At such a moment, the State requires the citizen to murder, or to be an accomplice in murder—demands which are quite obviously incompatible with the commandment of love, whatever men have been able to affirm to the contrary! In addition, in order to get soldiers to sacrifice their lives, the State arouses among them a kind of patriotic exaltation which borders on idolatry. Its whole behavior becomes suspect or scandalous in the eyes of Christians

who perceive even the least echo of "the new commandment." It is in this way that we are to explain the presence among Christians at all times of conscientious objectors, who are courageous enough to brave all risks and refuse to associate themselves with this criminal enterprise.

The witness thus rendered to Jesus Christ has not always been beyond reproach, but we must recognize in it one of the most authentic appeals of the Christian conscience. This cry ought to be heard by all those who have not yet understood what an unbearable scandal war represents in a world of which Jesus Christ is the Lord. It has a truer ring than all those apologies for the use of force, which attempt to find a scriptural basis for the law of the jungle. It makes those exegetes look somewhat ridiculous who work out a justification of war from a passage like *Romans*, 13, which is devoted to the justice and police powers of a world state, the Roman empire.

Nevertheless, the testimony borne by conscientious objectors has generally remained of an instinctive kind, and its great radicalism has not always been sufficiently noted. One would be able to maintain that the refusal to associate oneself takes on the meaning of an absolute submission to divine Law only if it is accompanied by the rejection of all violence, that is, of any state institution. It must at least be said that, in order to be something more than a matter of taking another political position, Christian conscientious objection must avoid *all* participation in *any* war. But there are cases in which a State would not be able to renounce war without committing a real suicide, which would take away from the society of which it is a guardian all chance of survival. The conscientious objector then lends himself to an operation which risks costing innumerable

human lives and sacrificing precious values of civilization for a long time. In such circumstances, he is no less a sinner than the soldier: like the latter, he violates one divine commandment to obey the other.

Christian thought has often wished to avoid that terrible dilemma by making a distinction between "just wars," in which all Christians are in conscience bound to participate, and "unjust wars," to which they should refuse their support. These two notions are today more alive than ever in the public opinion of the entire world, in a "secularized" form: we need think only of all the institutions founded in the 20th century to defend international ethics! It would be superficial to minimize the work that has been accomplished in this way. But it hardly provides ethical criteria which would permit Christians the moral choice to which God calls them. To pronounce oneself for or against the "justice" of a war is to bear a judgment of a political, or at most juridical, order. This is so even when it is Christians or a Church which is speaking. Such judgments then serve as a basis for taking a *political* position or action. Is it possible to make the choice of Christians, on a matter such as favoring or opposing participation in war, rest on such a shifting foundation?

It is more valuable to recognize that the main-spring of conscientious objection—its passion for obedience to God's will—is broken as soon as one tries to work out a casuistry of war. Besides, in making the "justice" of a war an ethical criterion, we make the "just war" dangerously close to the "holy" war. But every one knows that there are no worse brutes than Crusaders. It is good then that the certitude of the soldier who is fighting for justice should remain relative, limited, and secular.

Every war poses in the same terms the

ethical problem of the conflicts of moralities, even if the problem of the political attitude of the Christian changes its complexion in accordance with the conflict that is considered. Culpable before God whatever you do, Christian, will you be objector or soldier? There is at least one unacceptable attitude, which our Churches ought to denounce in the name of the Gospel: it consists in constantly avoiding God's demands, abstaining from public affairs in times of peace, and putting on the uniform resignedly when war breaks out.

The clearest approach would be always to choose a complete fidelity to the commandment of love, as a consistent conscientious objection demands. But does not such an attitude become a matter of no longer "rendering to Caesar" what remains due to him? Whatever one may say, does it not lead to political abstention and even sometimes to a refusal to meet with the world, which would be a contradiction of the Christian vocation?

It is necessary, on the contrary, that the menacing perspective of war should compel Christians to *take their roles as citizens seriously*, by recalling to them that *what they do today aids or discourages tomorrow the great tensions from which armed conflicts emerge*. By rejecting the temptation of absolute purity and that of resigned conformism, Christians ought to make a choice for a more complex and difficult behavior: always to be active citizens, soldiers if it is necessary (for military service and war), but sometimes objectors, when a situation has reached the point when statements and political action through normal means can no longer be of use.

We do not pretend to have settled the problem of double morality with these remarks. But how can it be settled except by the arrival of the Kingdom of God, of which we now have only a

foretaste? And if it is feared that by becoming overly involved in these paths Christians of different national and political background would only too easily become enrooted in their divisions, we would respond that Christian unity always remains a miracle: it is a matter of an impossible community, which is built up by the acceptance of the other, to whom Christ ties us in spite of everything which can oppose us.

THE SITUATION TODAY

UP TO NOW we have deliberately avoided bringing into question the traditional notions of the State and of war, in order to formulate more clearly the theological and ethical questions which are presented by the existence of one or the other. But the scientific, technical, social and political upheavals that the world has undergone in recent years bring a challenge to the Church, demonstrating that it cannot simply repeat the formulas elaborated at the time of Saint Augustine or Luther. The very "political preaching" which was correct yesterday, may today be a travesty of the Gospel, if it does not take into account the profound transformations that our time presents or will present to the State and to war.

A. *War is in the process of radically changing its character.* The purely quantitative changes which affect the means of destruction have brought about a qualitatively new situation: *the possibility of annihilating the whole of humanity, in its physical existence and in its reproductive capacity.*

This new possibility, by surging to the horizon of our history, brings into question the traditional and modern theses on the "just war." These theses, introduced into Christian ethics in order to introduce some limit rather than to justify any particular war enterprise,

found their place in it thanks to the assimilation of war to the practice of a magistrate. War was able to be considered a punitive expedition commanded by a magistrate as long as it permitted the protection of the community and the survival of its culture, its law and its values, as long as it was not "total." But the war which threatens today has crossed the threshold beyond which this function of safeguarding the community no longer seems possible. The type of war which the doctrine of the "just war" supposes is not that of the world war to come. The tie which still attached the right to war to the punitive function of the magistrate is in the process of being broken.

Besides, a certain number of limits, patiently introduced into the conduct of war by the human law, are losing their practical application: for example, the distinction between combattants and non-combattants, which was one of the bases of such law, seems to have disappeared; the war to come will not only be total in its effects, it will require the total utilization of all economic, political and cultural energies; every man and the whole man become combattants. In these conditions, does there remain a place for human rights?

Finally, the atomic equilibrium on which peace rests today does not bring genuine security to the world. Each of the camps seeks to break it. An error in calculation, a stroke of madness, a thrust of that "mystery of evil" which is at work even in peace, and which the Bible teaches us to unravel in every man, could break this precarious equilibrium. Ultimately, under the pressure of accumulated agony, there is a danger that some men would prefer such a rupture in order to be done with it all.

B. At the moment when, on the world level, the criteria of the "just war" are disappearing, the majority of the lim-

ited wars of recent years have been presented as police operations. Such operations, in order to merit that name, ought to respect the law which forbids all police to place criminal means at the service of the law.

Certainly, it is necessary to adapt the methods that are used to the form which the adversary's action takes. But by presenting this adversary as a criminal, the thesis of war as a "police operation" runs the danger of accepting the idea that it is legitimate to fight by any means. One believes oneself relieved of all responsibility in that regard, and any proposal giving a political solution to the conflict becomes suspect as treason.

In addition, public opinion, unhinged by the insoluble problems which seemingly minor conflicts seem to present, is ready to accept indiscriminately any form of action which is capable of ending these irritating situations rapidly. It accepts without reaction that grave violations of law are justified by *raison d'État* or considerations of efficiency. All countries are menaced—in various degrees, it is true—by a grave relapse which would call into question the acquisitions to which international agreements have given expression. The current of humanization of war, which would transcribe the principle of respect for the person into juridical formulas, would risk being more and more submerged by an unbridled arbitrariness which is especially frightening because it has at its disposition the immense means of modern technics. To ward off this insidious danger, we have an urgent need to re-evaluate our moral conceptions in the light of the current situation.

C. In many regions of the world, the Nation is no longer the fundamental political fact. The vital problems present themselves now on a world scale. It is perhaps still true, but it is no longer obvious, that the political responsi-

bility of the Christian should be exercised above all within the national framework: Europe, "the free world," "the peace camp," the Arab World, etc., are for many people more real countries than their own nation, which has become too small. Here we meet political choices that must be defended or attacked as such, not as moral perversions. To present patriotism as "the only morally defensible attitude," in opposition to these forms of internationalism, is no more the business of the Church than it was formerly its concern to oppose ancient feudal fidelity to absolute submission to the King.

If we are on the way to a supra-national power capable of maintaining order in the world, it is not yet established. But *from now on, patriotism has already changed its nature for millions of men*: it is perhaps still true, but it is no longer evident for everyone, that a sovereign State has the right to unleash a war when it is the victim of a grave injustice or the object of a threat that it believes cannot be avoided in any other way. Against its right and its chance of victory, it must place the risk of a generalized conflict and the reaction—whether founded or not—of public opinion throughout the world.

The menace of a total war which would practically annihilate humanity; the always latent risk of seeing "police operations" degenerate into counter-terror; the enfeeblement of the national State to the advantage of the large groupings which are still badly defined;—these appear to us to be the aspects of the international situation today which demand of our Churches a considerable effort in terms of information, reflection, and renewal. It is not enough to preach "Render to Caesar..." when no one knows very well any longer who Caesar is. It is not enough to recall that the State has the duty of protecting society

against the attacks coming from without when the least spark risks causing a world conflagration, and when the means employed compromise the feature that they are suppose to prepare.

Tragically uncertain of their message, profoundly divided on the problems of war and peace, our Churches are often too much the prisoners of secular habits and prejudices to undertake separately the immense effort which would give actuality to their "political preaching." It is necessary that Christians placed by God in the bosom of diverse national or ideological communities become aware of the help that they can bring mutually into this area, and of the ecumenical dimension of the Body of Christ. At a time when every policy has world-wide implications, this Body should manifest its unity by aiding each of its members to discover, in the communion of the universal Church, who is Caesar, and what means are still able to safeguard humanity and the communities which compose it.

V. THE ROLE OF THE CHURCHES

BY ALL EVIDENCE, it is not by direct participation in politics that the Churches and their para-ecclesiastical organisms are called upon "to prevent war." Numerous theological (cf. above, Section I, B) and practical considerations ought to deter ecclesiastical institutions from a domain where they do not have their place. It is for Christians *to commit themselves as individuals* on this path, as responsible citizens and with complete freedom. By encouraging them to do this, the Churches nevertheless are acquitting themselves of only a part of their task. In the troubled and complex world of today, they owe their members a constant aid, a political "cure of souls" which would keep in mind the great affirmations of the Gospel and

international reality. This difficult care of souls, whose execution requires ecumenical cooperation, would seem to be able to take the following forms:

(a) The Church ought to announce constantly that Christ, by His passion and resurrection, has accomplished an act of peace, a reconciliation, that He has placed in the womb of the ancient world the foundation of the new world, and that *it is the task of His disciples to give through history visible signs of this reconciliation*. Should not the life of parishes be conceived—and perhaps reformed—in a way to furnish such signs, by associating as much as possible people of different classes, nationalities and races for common tasks? Should not all Christian teaching conduct those who receive it to make of their lives signs of this peace? Such signs can obviously not bring the political tensions of the world to an end, but they can serve as reference points and open the door to hope.

(b) *The Church ought not to give up the possibility of directly addressing itself to the political authorities*, in order to recall to them with all necessary courage that the recourse to war is always abnormal. In doing this it ought always to avoid two traps: excessive multiplication of public declarations, or becoming a body of experts called upon to furnish ingenious political formulas for each embarrassing situation. Public declarations made by ecclesiastical authorities on international affairs have meaning only if they are above all destined to recall to Christians the requirements of the Gospel and to facilitate the choices that they have to make as citizens. The real dialogue with politicians in responsible roles requires more discretion and will more often be accomplished in face-to-face intimacy.

This face-to-face meeting, at whatever level that it takes place, loses a great deal of its meaning if it reduces itself

to a conversation between experts, in the course of which representatives of the Churches present their formulas or are briefed on the slogans of the political authorities. It has value only if it is the occasion of a precise application of a "political preaching" which is already solidly rooted in the Gospel—and if it is a care of souls.

(c) It is the formulation, diffusion and proclamation of this "political preaching" which today constitutes the most urgent task of the Churches if they wish to contribute to the prevention of war. As we underlined in the conclusion of Part III, they must help each other discover in our time who the Caesar is to whom the Christians ought to give what he needs in order to protect the human community; and what are the means which Caesar ought to use in the defense against external menaces without bringing on the ruin of humanity as a whole.

This research cannot, of course, lead to complete agreement, but the confusion of Christian thought today on these questions is so great that such study would at least permit some points to be clarified, and give an actuality to "political preaching" which it has lost. For example, the political responsibility of the Christian, which has continued to be exercised within the framework of the Nation, is henceforth doubled by a responsibility at a supernational level whose conditions of exercise cannot long remain as imprecise as they are today without great danger; in addition, while certain forms of war ("limited" war, revolutionary war) continue to appear legitimate, there is perhaps a form of "total war" which Christians ought to refuse to prepare, or to wage, because it escapes all control and can only end in the destruction of humanity as a whole.

(d) The proclamation of a "political preaching," renewed in this manner,

ought to be completed by *the diffusion of a solid documentation* on today's political, economic, social, and international problems, and on modern war (and wars). It seems indispensable to us that this effort at formation and information should be confided to an ecumenical organism enjoying a certain autonomy in regard to the World Council of Churches and the member Churches. We would like to conceive of an enlarged Commission for International Affairs, which, somewhat in the manner of the Pax Christi organization sponsored by the Roman Church, would organize national and international meetings, publish booklets, a review, short films, aimed at parish distribution among the member Churches. National committees would assure the liaison with opinion in various countries.

To avoid the crystallization of an "ecumenical orthodoxy" on international questions, two precautions would be necessary. The organization thus brought to life ought to be an open movement, and its orientation should be freely discussed among the representatives of the Churches of the different areas of the

world. They should work in strict collaboration with private groups which already are concerned that Christians participate in the prevention of war.

Such an organization could play an important role in various ways: it would bring the theme of peace, which today has been abandoned to pacifists and to "progressives," to many pastors and faithful, whose indifference would become a great deal more difficult to justify; it would contribute to an actualization of preaching and religious teaching; it would diminish the uneasiness felt by some Christians before the incapacity of the Churches to take a clear attitude on the subject of war; it would help Christian opinion in various countries to emerge from the isolation that international events of past or present may have enclosed in.

We believe then that the next Assembly of the World Council of Churches ought to pronounce itself in favor of creating an organism of this kind, on the basis of a specific project, supported by various member Churches.

Translated by JOSEPH E. CUNNEEN

THE COMMONWEAL

As a wholly independent lay weekly which is primarily concerned with the temporal order—the specific province of the layman—The Commonweal clearly cannot claim to speak for the Church. Its editors have not been commissioned by the Church; they certainly cannot speak with the spiritual authority of the Church, nor indeed even with the Church's temporal experience. As editors we have often gone out of our way to make this clear in the pages of the magazine. . . .

The fact, however, that we are Catholics and tend to see the temporal order as being directly related to the spiritual surely distinguishes this magazine from similar journals of opinion. The fact that most readers of The Commonweal are Catholics who take a lively interest in the Church and seriously try to conform their thinking on temporal questions to their spiritual commitments also means something. Finally, most of the magazine's contributors are Catholics—some of them quite eminent Catholics and personally invested with authority which The Commonweal as such does not have. They write in these pages because they know that here they can quite consciously speak as Catholics. This is also not without meaning. . . .

As long as The Commonweal continues to concern itself mainly with the thorny social and political problems of the day—dealing in concrete realities and not only in abstract principles—a large number of Catholics will continue to take issue with the magazine. This is as it should be. Anyone publishing a journal of opinion, Catholic or not, must count on the fact that the world is full of people with opinions of their own.

—from a leaflet, *What is The Commonweal?*

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MORAL ACTS AND THE PSEUDO-MORALITY OF THE UNCONSCIOUS

ALBERT PLÉ

IT IS MUCH EASIER to rejoice at the sight of psychiatrists posing questions to theologians than for the theologian to give a complete and satisfactory answer within the scope of a single article. It is deemed desirable, nevertheless, to propose here a token reply, which would have the advantage of going to the heart of the questions posed and, perhaps, offer a general principle of solution.

What is common and fundamental to all the questions raised could be formulated in these words: Does an authentic morality exist—which would presuppose moral conscience, freedom, responsibility, mind—or, after all, are what we call spiritual values (art, morality, religion) only the effects of physio-psychological determinism or end-products of sublimated unconscious impulses?

This is not a new problem which, in the name of an absolute materialism and determinism, questions the existence of mind and freedom. For lack of space, and perhaps of competence, we shall limit ourselves to stating the question in a Freudian context. Freud, as a matter of record, sharpened the issue to a

new edge. If conscience is only the Freudian super-ego, there is no such thing as moral conscience in the theological sense of the term. If religion is nothing but an obsessional neurosis, there is really no such thing as religion. Moralists are simply either great dupes or hypocrites. All man's striving for moral beauty is illusory, ineffectual, and neurotic.

To many these seem the inescapable consequences of Freudianism taken as a therapeutic method or, at the very least, as a metaphysical doctrine.¹ However, in a long needed study, Doctor Charles Odier,² keeping within the limits of clinical observation, has with real insight shown that the morality of the super-ego is only a pseudo-morality. He has very precisely distinguished it from the 'moral consciousness' governed by such values as Duty, Goodness, Mind. Other psychoanalysts also have striven to make room for spiritual values.³ As diverse and more or less successful as these attempts have been, they all evince a start on a line of inquiry which encourages the hope that psychoanalytic doctrine and therapy will more and more take into account the features of

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¹ Cf. Roland Dalbiez, *La méthode psychanalytique et la doctrine freudienne*, Desclée de Brouwer, Paris.

² Cf. Dr. Charles Odier, *Les deux sources, consciente et inconsciente, de la vie morale*, Ed. de la Baconnière, Neuchâtel, 1943.

³ Especially the works of Père Mailloux, O.P., Dr. Zilboorg, Père Bruno de Jésus-Marie, O.C.D., Père Beirnaert, S.J., Father Dempsey, O.F.M., Cap., Charles Baudouin, Canon Nuttin, Dr. Flugel, Father Victor White, O.P., Mme. Maryse Choisy, Doctors Binswanger, Caruso, von Gern, etc.

human conduct that reveal the existence of a genuine morality.

The moral theology inspired by Saint Thomas might effectively contribute to the effort so forcefully launched by Odier on the level of psychoanalysis. It is with this in mind that we would outline the structure of the moral act according to Saint Thomas. After examining the essence of the moral act—its specific qualities, its sphere of influence, and its inferior analogues—it will be seen how the theologian, in reference to Freud's viewpoint and particular contribution, is in a position to locate genuine moral life in its own proper domain.

A MORALITY OF DUTY OR A MORALITY OF HUMAN ACTS?

SAIN'T THOMAS' idea of what constitutes morality is far removed from what the man in the street understands by morality in our day. And, not only the man in the street, but also the majority of philosophers, moralists and psychoanalysts! Each, though in his own particular way, sets the notions of duty and law at the centre of his ethics.

This is not so with Saint Thomas. What we call morality (the term is later than he and unknown to him, as is the distinction between dogmatic and moral theology),⁴ is for him, according to the old schema of the Pseudo-Dionysius, the return of the creature towards God. Since the human creature has 'rationality' as the mark of its specific difference—according to which it is an image of God—this return to God is accomplished by rational acts, that is to say, by those of which it is itself the internal principle, and which it makes its own because it has control over them. After devoting the first part of the *Summa*

Theologica to God and Creation, Saint Thomas opens the second part with these words:

It remains for us to treat of God's image, that is to say, man, inasmuch as he, too, is the principle of his actions as having free will and control over his actions (*Prologue I-II*).

Law, for Saint Thomas, is only an exterior help which, besides its function of promoting the common good of society, is to be considered as a kindly tutor who dispenses directives and sanctions with the sole purpose of bringing about the birth and growth of 'the man in the child.'⁵ Such a guide works from without, to rouse the child to his own activity, maturity, and self-direction.⁶

The external law is at the service of the internal law of man's development, the law of his nature. Endowed with reason, the human creature is incited to follow the law of his nature when he discovers it within himself by the light of his reason. For a reasonable creature, the natural law is to live reasonably. Moral obligation is not primarily and fundamentally a Stoic or Kantian imperative; nor is it of external origin as is social pressure or the Freudian superego—it is interior. It is to man what the biological law is to the animal. Moral obligation is an interior exigency for development along the lines of what makes him specifically man. It excludes all external constraint. This obligation towards his own nature is at the same time, of course, an obligation towards God. But, even in regard to God, rather, especially in regard to Him, the obligation rests fundamentally on the freedom of our acts. There cannot be any constraint where the matter of specifically

⁵ Cf. *Summa Theologica*, I-II, 90:2.

⁶ Saint Thomas, *In. Ethic.*, X, lect. 14; *S. Th.*, I-II, 90:3 ad 2; and J. Kopf, O.P., "La loi, indispensable pédagogue," *Supplément de la Vie Spirituelle*, No. 17, mai 1951, 185-200.

⁴ Cf. M. M. Labourdette, O.P., "Chronique de théologie morale," *Revue Thomiste*, juillet-septembre, 1956, pp. 528-541.

human acts is concerned, because the specific character of the return of a human creature to its Creator cannot be accomplished save by free acts.

To the degree to which there is compulsion, this return is not made according to the specific law of man's nature. Such a turning back to God is distorted in nature; it is ontologically and morally bad, or at the very least, imperfect: it is not human.

This basic truth is apparent also on the level of grace. The New Law of the Gospel, says Saint Thomas, is basically "the grace of the Holy Spirit in us which is shown forth by faith that worketh through love."⁷ As for the secondary precepts of the New Law, we fulfill them "through the interior promptings of grace" (*ex interiori instinctu gratiae*), and therefore "freely."⁸

To sum up; for Saint Thomas, moral obligation consists in the fact that man, of himself, freely obligates himself to return to God according to the inward truth by which he is what he is, in virtue of his nature and in virtue of God's grace. Once this point is grasped, it is easy to understand why, in Saint Thomas' treatise on the return of man to his Creator, so little space is given to exterior law. The essential part of his study bears on the acts by which man returns to God on the principles of these acts, the virtues. Saint Thomas' Ethics is "dynamic,"⁹ a morality of love¹⁰ and of happiness, because it is a morality of interior liberty. It is not centered on the law or on moral conscience dictated to and pivoted on Duty.

Saint Thomas does not ignore conscience. He considers it an act of the intellect by which we recognize ourselves

responsible for our acts, judge what we must do, accuse ourselves and experience self-reproach and remorse.¹¹

Saint Thomas does not find the rule and measure of conscience in an imperative obligation, but in reason:

The rule and the measure of human acts is the reason, which is the imperative principle of human acts (I-II, 90:1).

"Obligation is a bond, not a rule," Père Tonneau¹² writes; and he goes on to say: "It is knowledge of the rule (or conscience) which binds the will and not knowledge of its obligatory character."

It was a common error in the nineteenth century to seek the first principle of moral conduct in a notion that holds true for only one topic of ethics, that of justice. It happens that the notion of Duty necessarily supposes relations with others, and this notion is capable of extension only inductively (perhaps only metaphorically) to other parts of ethics, still less to the first and common principle of all moral activity.

Whether the psychoanalysts are attacking ethics or whether they are making an effort to show it some respect, it seems to us that they are mistaken when they use an ethics of Duty or of Obligation as their point of reference. They are excusable because it is this species of ethics that is the most prevalent even in certain Catholic circles. We consider this error to be one with very serious consequences. Charles Odier, for example, would have given us an entirely different book and one far more enlightening for moralists and psychoanalysts both, if he had been unfettered by this concept of morality.

⁷ I-II, 108:1c.

⁸ I-II, 108:1 ad 2.

⁹ In Greek, virtue is 'dynamis'; in Latin, 'virtus.'

¹⁰ Cf. "Loi et Amour," *Supplément de la Vie Spirituelle*, No. 17, mai 1951.

¹¹ "Dicitur conscientia testificari, ligare, vel instigare et etiam accusare, vel remordere sive reprehendere," I, 79:13.

¹² J. Tonneau, O.P., "Devoir et morale," *Revue des Sciences Philosophiques et Théologiques*, t. xxxviii, avril 1954, No. 2, p. 243.

When 'the morality of conscience' is brought face to face with 'the pseudo-morality of the unconscious,' we find its position shifted and enhanced by a perspective unknown to the mentality inherited from the nineteenth century. If the moral life finds its first principle not in an imperative obligation, but in an inclination of nature which moves man to act according to what he is, there is a complete change of viewpoint and, at once, the imperative drives of the super-ego show themselves in their deformities and as inadequate to animate a genuine moral life.

The comparison to be attempted here will be based on the concept of 'human act' which St. Thomas identifies with moral act.

THE HUMAN ACT

1. *Its Essence*

Of actions done by man, those alone are properly called *human* which are proper to man as man. Now man differs from irrational creatures in that he is master of his actions. From which fact it follows that those actions alone are properly called human of which man is the master. But it is through his reason and his will that man is master of his actions; because of this, free-will is called a faculty of the will and of reason. Therefore, those actions are properly called human which proceed from a deliberate will. If there are any other actions attributed to man, they can be called acts of man but not properly human acts since they do not proceed from man as man (I-II, 1:1).

THESE ARE THE STATEMENTS with which Saint Thomas opens the extensive second part of the *Summa Theologica*, which treats of man's return towards God. They make very plain the fact that the return of a reasonable creature to its Creator is accomplished essentially by conjoint acts of reason and will, by free acts, in a word, by 'human acts.'

These acts are the specific object of what is now called Moral Theology. The moral act is the human act: "*Idem sunt actus morales et actus humanis.*"¹³ Any act that is not 'human,' has no moral value of itself.

Before going any farther, it may be well to recall what Saint Thomas understands by reason, will and freedom.

The human intelligence, first set in action by sense data, comes to know in its full capacity of certitude and clarity only after the difficult labor of abstraction and reasoning. This type of intelligence, peculiar to man, is known as reason. The will is called an 'appetite,' that is to say, "a movement towards another being, *motus in aliud tendens.*"¹⁴ "The act of the will is nothing else but an inclination proceeding from an interior principle of knowledge."¹⁵ By his rational intelligence man knows an object; he tends toward it with his will. Since love is the primary and most fundamental movement of every appetency, to reduce the subject to its essential element, it can be said that to will is to love. It means loving what is known through the rational intelligence. The converse may be stated: the human intelligence is capable of an affective life proper to itself. The distinction of man from the animal does not lie solely in his speculative powers. He has also an affectivity, which can be called spiritual to distinguish it from sensitive affectivity. There is in man, in as much as he is man, an aptitude for a life of the spirit which too many philosophers have become accustomed to limit to philosophical or scientific knowledge. He is endowed with a power of loving which, although it is not in the sensible order, is no less (but, by that fact, better) a type of love.

¹³ I-II, 1:3.

¹⁴ In *De Anima*, III, 5.

¹⁵ I-II, 6:4.

Immediately it will be apparent that Saint Thomas' ethics is based entirely on the principle that the human act, that is the moral act, is a 'reasonable love.' The point stressed in this statement is that an act is moral to the degree in which it is animated by love of an object known and evaluated by the rational intelligence.¹⁶

At one stroke, everything that is of an arbitrary or constraining nature is eliminated from the moral act. By the act of his will, man is for himself his own principle of activity. It means that constraint on this level is a contradiction in terms. If there is coercion, there is no voluntary act, hence no moral act.¹⁷ In the same way, if there is compulsion, there is no love. Since the moral act is an act of the will, it coincides with freedom of spirit and spiritual love. The moral act is an act of love and freedom.

Servitude is opposed to freedom. Since what is free is its own cause (*qui causa sui est*), as Aristotle puts it, a slave is one who does not act as cause of his own action, but as though moved from without. Now, whoever does a thing through love, does it of himself (*ex seipso operatur*), because he is moved to act by his personal incentive (*ex propria inclinatione*). Consequently, it is contrary to the very notion of servility to act from love (II-II, 19:4).

The moral act, then, is a "spiritual" love; otherwise it is not a moral act. The very obligation to obey, for example, such and such a precept, if it is to be a perfectly 'moral' obligation, must be fulfilled through love and not through fear: "If you love me, you will keep My commandments (John 14:15)."

¹⁶ I-II, 4:3; 36:2; 41:3; 70:3. Note that Saint Thomas is speaking of love not only as passion but as rational appetency: I, 82:5; I-II, 22:3 ad 3.

¹⁷ I-II, 6:4.

The obligation to obey a precept is not opposed to liberty except in a person whose mind is averse to that which is prescribed, as may be seen in those who keep the precepts through fear alone. But the precept of love cannot be fulfilled save by one's own will (*nisi ex propria voluntate*). That is the reason this precept is not opposed to liberty (II-II, 44:1, ad 2).

It is apparent that this conception of morality is faithful to the gospel, which makes the whole Law (and the Prophets) depend on the double commandment of charity: "Thou shalt love." It is doubtful if enough attention has been focused on the paradox involved in this commandment. Love is not something that can be commanded; a person cannot love out of a sense of duty, or by coercion. This is not to say that love is not an obligation for us. There is an obligation for a child—because it is the interior law of his nature—to love his parents. He 'must' love them, but if he were to love 'on account of duty,' he would not be loving them. In the same way, to perform a moral act 'through a sense of duty,' no matter how obligatory it may be, is to perform it in a manner which cannot be qualified as theologically moral in the fullest sense of the term. The moral act is free because it is a loving act. It is an act of love because it is free:

Since the will is ordered to that which is truly good, whenever either through passion or by a bad habit or disposition, man turns away from the true good, he acts slavishly. If the will's natural order is considered, this conduct is slavish in as much as man is diverted by some extraneous thing. But, from the point of view that the act of the will tends towards an apparent good (in this case, a false moral good), man acts freely when he follows passion or corrupt habit. Yet he acts slavishly if, while his will remains turned towards the false good, he refrains from what he wants from fear

of the law which condemns the false good (S.C.G. IV, 22:6).

It is impossible to be too firm about excluding all servile fear from the perfect moral act. To repeat: unless the return of the human creature to God were free, it would not be according to man's nature. Pains must be taken to acquire the real facts about this liberty which specifies a moral act.¹⁸ Liberty is not contrary to necessity. Saint Thomas says: "The will desires (*appetit*) freely, even though it desire (*appetat*) necessarily."¹⁹ Before him, Saint Augustine²⁰ had already said that liberty is opposed to the necessity of coercion but it is not opposed to natural necessity. Coercion connotes everything set up in opposition to that towards which man tends by nature. On the other hand, everything which corresponds to the internal law of a being is natural to it. Every moment and every act is voluntary which derives from the subject's own inclination.²¹ Moreover, the natural good of the will is to tend towards the Good, in other words, to want Happiness. Now this willing of happiness is an act of the will, that is to say, it is an act which has within itself its principle of activity. Willing takes place when, of himself, man does what he wants. In so far as he wills, he is a principle in himself, *in quantum est volens, principium est ex ipso*;²² and he is master of his actions (*dominus suorum actuum*).²³

This is what must be labelled liberty—self-determination and control over ac-

tion. It is not opposed to any natural necessity. I cannot will anything but happiness to the degree in which I determine myself to this act; to the degree in which I have control over it, there is a genuine act of the will, a human act, a moral act.

The will faced with perfect happiness is, therefore, at the same time both determined and free. The blessed in heaven know this supreme liberty in all its splendor; they no longer have a choice between good and evil; they tend of themselves with their whole power of willing towards the Supreme Good. They take their delight in It, and in It they attain the fullest liberty.

But, on this earth, the good appears to us and attracts us only under multiple forms of particular good, not one of which can fully satisfy our will.²⁴ We must choose among these goods. Intelligence and will join forces to enlighten us about the various goods that are expedient for us under some specific aspect and make us love these goods in reference to the Supreme Good. It is this liberty of choice that is called free-will, a joint act of reason and will.²⁵

This form of liberty does not find its perfection either in the greatest possible number of objects presented to its choice, or in the greatest possible indifference in their regard, but primarily in that which constitutes the essence of liberty: self-determination. I make up my mind about such and such a choice. I make the choice my own. I commit myself to it with my whole will, which means with my love. It is in this that I am free. For this reason Saint Thomas writes that whatever we do through love, we do voluntarily. (*Id quod ex amore facimus, maxime voluntarie facimus*).²⁶ It is the same case for what we do with

¹⁸ Cf. Jacques Maritain, *De Bergson à Thomas d'Aquin*, Hartmann, Paris, 1957, ch. 5 & 6; also, Noël Mailloux, O.P., "Déterminisme psychique, liberté et développement de la personnalité," *Supplément de la Vie Spirituelle*, No. 22, septembre 1952, pp. 257-276.

¹⁹ *De Potentia*, X, 2 ad 5. Cf. S. Th. I, 82:1.

²⁰ Saint Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, V, 10.

²¹ I-II, 6:1.

²² II-II, 59:3.

²³ I-II, 1:1.

²⁴ I-II, 17:1 ad 2; 10:3; 13:6, etc.

²⁵ I, 82:1 & 2.

²⁶ I-II, 114:4.

pleasure (*ea quae per delectationem fiunt, sunt simpliciter voluntarie*).²⁷

The more intelligent a man is, the better able he is to find a happy solution to a problem because he has an understanding of the problem. The solution thrusts itself upon him so much the more necessarily as he sees truth in it. There is necessity, but no constraint whatsoever. In the same way, the more 'moral' a man is, that is to say, the more deeply oriented he is towards the Good and the more definitely set on his way towards It, the less is he constrained. For the moral problem posed to him, he finds the best adapted and most effective line of conduct. This line of conduct thrusts itself upon him but without any coercion. And it will be moral just in as much as he makes it his own, just in as much as he, of himself, decides on it.

The fact of being a person of virtuous habits does not lessen liberty; it contributes towards an increase of liberty. And this remains true, even when there is no question of choice, as happens, for example, in the case of someone who has taken the three vows of religion.²⁸

It thus comes about that the moral act—so aptly termed by Saint Thomas the human act—has for its specific character the quality of being a self-determined act. It is of itself its own internal principle. It is free. This means that it is the product of that which specifies man as man and which usually is called his mind: rational intelligence and spiritual love.

Therefore, according to Saint Thomas, morality, far from seeking its norm and perfection in law, in some super-ego, or in any other impulsion extrinsic to the will, takes as its standard and goal the

human act under the aspect of liberty. The law (*nomos*) of morality is internal; it is an 'auto-nomy.' Every 'hetero-nomy' lowers the status of the moral act and could not constitute its essence. Just the opposite, it is the very autonomy of an act which qualifies it as moral and as principle of all morality. This characteristic furnishes the theologian with the most fundamental criterion he is obliged to use for evaluating the moral quality of any line of conduct.

2. *The Specific Qualities of the Human Act*

Essentially free, the human act is endowed with certain attributes that make it the particular thing it is and that can serve as criteria. These are its principal characteristics:

1) The will, therefore every human act, has for its specific object that which is known by the rational intelligence. If, on the level of essences, it is valid and useful to distinguish cognition and appetite, it is proper, on the level of operation, to study these two in their joint activity. Their collaboration is obvious in the human act, which shows the qualities of each. The will tends towards its object according to the order of reason²⁹ or, which comes to the same, reason puts order into the will, order based on truth. In so far as an object of the will is known and evaluated by the reason, it is attained in its objectivity, which means in its truth—it is known as it is. The idea which I form of it corresponds to what it is: *Adaequatio rei et intellectus*. The human act proceeds from objective knowledge. That knowledge is of the same order as scientific and philosophical knowledge. An act is neither human nor moral without this characteristic of objective truth.

2) There is present a human act to

²⁷ II-II, 142:3.

²⁸ II-II, 88:4 *ad* 1; 104:2 *ad* 1. A slave can obey his master's orders voluntarily, that is to say, freely. II-II, 81:2, *ad* 2.

²⁹ I-II, 13:1.

the degree in which the will, the intellectual appetite, even in an act of its affection for a particular good, loves in the particular good a universal quality—universal Goodness.

The intellectual appetite, though it tends to individual things which exist outside the soul, yet tends to them under a universal aspect, as when it desires something because it is good (I, 80:2, *ad* 2).

To be a human act, and therefore a moral attitude, it is therefore necessary that it reach beyond the particular object loved; there must be an 'open-ness' to the universal. The greater this openness, the greater is the moral value of the act. Moreover, this relationship derives logically from the concept of morality which defines it as the return of the human creature to God. In every act of intellectual cognition and of spiritual affection, God is always, more or less obscurely, the object of cognition and appetite.³⁰ In fact, it is a property of man's nature to have universal ideas and to know everything under this modality. It is also a property of his will not to fix itself on that which is particular, but to go on to the universal and the unlimited. Man's will-to-be and his will-to-live, under whatever finite form they present themselves, rest on a more radical will for being and life *per se* and this is precisely the reason that concrete forms of existence never fully satisfy man. On this count, man, willing or not, loves himself in someone greater than himself, in an absolute to which he attaches himself.

By unfolding thus to God, the human act is responding as to a summons from God. Of course, it is God who allows us to posit a human act and invites us to do so. He does this by working within us, giving us that interiority of spirit which allows us to will freely, and by

working from without, presenting Himself to be 'divined' and loved beyond the objects of our intellectual cognition and appetite.³¹

Because grace grants us the means to purify, strengthen and raise the level of our open-ness to God, something that is always postulated in a human act, this exposure to His influence has eminent moral value, the more so because it is, besides, the restoring and animating factor of our liberty.³²

3) The human act—besides its debt to rational intelligence for these qualities of objectivity, universality and transcendence—is also under obligation to it, especially in connection with reason's practical functioning, for that orderly procedure whereby it goes from interior activity to exterior deployment. Ordination, the establishment of relations, is proper to reason. On the speculative plane, this function of reason is called science or philosophy. On the practical plane, it bears chiefly on beings in regard to their final end,³³ *rationis est ordinare in finem*.³⁴

The human act is satisfactorily oriented in reference to the authentic plenary end of man through reason. It is not the will that establishes order in the human act; the will tends towards its good under the direction of reason³⁵

4) The object of a human act has all these qualities because of the fact that it is known and evaluated by reason. It has other attributes also, derived from the will itself and the will's proper object.

The object of every appetitive faculty is the good. There is love only for what is (or seems to be) good. As intellectual appetite, the will has for object univer-

³¹ I-II, 9:6.

³² I-II, 108:1 *ad* 2; 113:3 *ad* 2.

³³ II-II, 141:6.

³⁴ I-II, 90:1.

³⁵ I-II, 12:1 *ad* 3; 12:3 *ad* 2.

³⁰ I, 12:1; 60:5; S.C.G., 3:38.

sal goodness. Of course it tends towards individual objects, but it attains in them that which underlies all goodness. That is the reason Professor de Greeff says: "He who claims to be fighting for liberty but does not fight also for his enemy's freedom, does not fight for liberty itself but just for his own freedom." The love I bear for liberty is a human act only if it is everybody's liberty that I love in a certain person's liberty, not only and exclusively the liberty of that individual.

5) The will finds its end in this good which is loved. The end, known and willed as such, gives the human act its qualification of 'human,' which is the same as saying 'moral.'³⁶ The better known and willed the end is as such, the more perfectly human the act.³⁷ It is the quality of this end which gives to the human act its moral quality, its essence. It is a human act to the degree in which the subject orients himself, of himself and within himself, towards an end known and loved as such—in short, when there is a will-action prompted by an end—and the morality of the act is measured by the morality of the end.

Man is able to give himself to numerous and manifold objects, and there are partial or intermediate ends. There are all those required to attain an end and those that are willed in reference to the principal end. Saint Thomas says that all the last type and those *ea quae sunt ad finem* are relative to the absolute final end. This final end is nothing less than the perfect good of this particular man, the good in which he finds his perfect fulfillment, which completely satisfies his intellectual appetite. Furthermore, this end can be but one and unique.³⁸

This ultimate unique end supplies the

human act at one and the same time with its essence and its dynamism. "The principle in the successive movements of the rational appetite is the last end."³⁹ Any secondary good which attracts the intellectual appetite does so only by reference to the ultimate end.⁴⁰ Granted that it is not necessary for the ultimate end willed in a human act to be loved in every case by explicit, deliberate reference to that end, even so, the ultimate end must have been loved and willed in an earlier act whose orientation and intention have not been revoked but are implicitly contained in the acts which follow. The walker does not need to direct his mind at each step towards the goal of his walk; this omission does not check his progress. But there must be a first step in the chosen direction and he must keep going in that direction. Man is not capable of a human act save in so far as, by a first act, he gives himself up to the ultimate end of life. This initial moral act marks his induction into moral life. It can be understood, then, why Saint Thomas asserts, in his *Treatise on Sin*, that the first sin an unbaptized child can commit is never a venial sin but always a mortal sin. Before attaining the use of reason, he sins neither mortally nor venially. His first human act orders him in reference to the ultimate end of his life:

Now the first thing that occurs to a man to think about is to deliberate about himself. And if he then deliberately direct himself to his due end, he will receive the remission of original sin. Whereas, if he does not direct himself to the due end, as far as he is capable of discretion at that particular age, he will sin mortally through not doing that which is in his power to do (I-II, 89:6).

This example indicates the decisive role of the ultimate end in the initial

³⁶ I-II, 1 & 3.

³⁷ I-II, 6:1 & 2.

³⁸ I-II, 1:5.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ I-II, 1:6.

human act of moral life. It is well to notice here that the means and the objects employed to attain a subordinate end are willed only by reference, as explicitly as possible, to the secondary end,⁴¹ and this subordinate end is willed by reference to and because of its relation to the final end. In this way, every voluntary movement is magnetized by the act of the will towards the final end. The better known and loved this ultimate end is as such, the more active its attractive force in the willing of secondary ends and those *ea quae sunt ad finem*, the more these subordinate ends are loved by explicit and dynamic reference to the ultimate end, the more perfect is the human act, the greater its moral value, because it means a more rapid and definite return towards God of the human creature in so far as he is human.

6) There is love and love. The love of the intellectual appetitive faculty is called 'dilection.' It is a love that is free and implies a choice;⁴² it is the noblest type of love and the most human of the forms of love possible to man as the image of God. The moral end is therefore loved with dilection. It exerts an attraction on man, it arouses and builds in him a favorable disposition towards its object, it shapes a resemblance to the object which tends towards assimilation, finally union. He who loves goes out of himself.⁴³ By his intelligence, man forms for himself an idea of this end; but, by love, he surrenders himself to it. Intelligence operates in an unreal and ideal mode. Love is realistic, attains reality; it is 'ecstatic' according to the ancients; 'oblatif' according to the French psychoanalysts. Therefore one of the specific qualities of the moral act is the ecstatic or self-transcendent.

7) A love fulfilled is happy. It is usual

to define beatitude as the perfect happiness resulting from the possession of one's last end. Here arises the old problem for which Aristotle never found a solution:⁴⁴ Is man's ultimate end beatitude or the reality itself which gives beatitude? We shall give here the line of argument that Saint Thomas follows in his exploration, on the plane of intellectual love, "beyond the pleasure-principle."

He distinguishes, in the ultimate end of man, the end in its extra-subjective reality (*ipsa res*), and the possession of that end (*adeptio rei*). The miser's end, taken as a whole, includes the money and the possession of the money. The authentic end of man is God (*ipsa res*) and man's union with God (*adeptio rei*). This love of the *res* and of the *adeptio rei* cannot be disassociated. That does not make two ends but only one, taken in all its fullness.⁴⁵ The act and its object cannot be disassociated; they constitute a metaphysical unity.

The willing of the ultimate end, therefore, tends at one and the same time, to God and to union with God. This union with God is the fruit of knowledge and of love: the vision of God effects this union, the attainment of which, fully satisfying the will, makes us happy. The will does not seek this good to derive joy from it—that would be to put its ultimate end in its self; the *res* would not be the ultimate end. The will can be satisfied only by the goodness it finds in the object, not in itself.⁴⁷

Knowledge from the senses does not attain to the universal idea of the goodness common to all beings, but only to some particular good, which Saint Thomas calls 'delectable' or 'the pleasant.'

⁴⁴ I-II, 28:1 & 3; *Compendium Theologiae*, XLVI, 3, sent., 27, 1.1.4th.

⁴⁵ *Nic. Ethics*, X, 6; Saint Thomas, *S. Th.* I-II, 4:2.

⁴⁶ I-II, 11:3 *ad* 3.

⁴⁷ I-II, 4:2.

⁴¹ I-II, 8:2.

⁴² I-II, 26:3.

⁴³ I-II, 28:3.

Consequently, on the level of sensitive appetite, a subject acts to enjoy (*operationes quaeruntur propter delectationem*). On the contrary, the intelligence apprehends the universal concept of good—the attainment of which results in delight (*ad cuius consecutionem sequetur delectatio*) and this is why the intellectual appetite seeks the Good rather than delight.⁴⁸

In the rich complexity of the ultimate end is found a sort of hierarchial relationship. That which is willed, first of all and above all, is the end in its extra-subjective existence; then, by a real relation to it, the act of union with this end—the substance of this act being vision, but the act reaching its climax in enjoyment of happiness.⁴⁹ This happiness is not willed for itself as the final end; it is willed only in reference to union with God, and the union is willed only in reference to God Himself, and in Himself.⁵⁰

It can be seen how Saint Thomas, in his concept of morality, while opening wide his arms to joy and happiness, escapes the clutches of hedonism. The 'reality-principle' is substituted in the human act for the 'pleasure-principle'.⁵¹ The thomistic doctrine of morality neither represses nor expunges joy; it simply puts joy in its rightful place. Joy is present in the end of every human act. Saint Thomas' *Treatise on Morality* begins with a study of beatitude and on that basis he constructs his whole exposition. In the opening lines of the prologue to *Summa Theologica*, I-II, Question 6, he indicates the approach that

will orient and articulate the whole second part of the *Summa Theologica*.

Since, therefore, Beatitude (or perfect Happiness) is to be gained by certain acts, we must in due sequence consider human acts in order to know by what acts we may obtain Happiness, and by what acts we are hindered in our way to Beatitude.

Beatitude, which signifies 'final perfection',⁵² exercises its dynamic influence from the first to the last of all human acts which make us progress towards complete and final happiness. Each human act possesses also, on its own count, this quality of happiness, which is like "a participation in Beatitude" (*Ibid.*). Happiness is also its own criterion. The virtuous man acts virtuously with spiritual joy.

Since the repose of the will and every appetite in the good is pleasure, man is reckoned good or bad according to what gives pleasure to his will; since that man is good and virtuous who takes pleasure in works of virtue, and the man evil who takes pleasure in evil works (I-II, 34:4).

This joy gives completion to the human act, perfects it. There is no perfectly good act without this delight in the good. So it comes about that, in a certain way, the moral goodness of this pleasure is the "cause of goodness in this action."⁵³ Pleasure gives the act its fulfillment *per modum finis*. To the degree that pleasure is integrated with the end and related to it, the will finds there its satisfaction. Consequently, pleasure renders the operation of the will stronger, more persevering and gives it wider extension.⁵⁴ Enjoyment derived from the love that is called 'dilection' is another specific criterion of the moral act.

8) There remains one last test, which is only a variant of the one above. Saint

⁴⁸ I-II, 4:2 ad 2.

⁴⁹ I-II, 4:1.

⁵⁰ Cf. A. Plé, "Saint Thomas et la psychologie des profondeurs," *Supplément de la Vie Spirituelle*, No. 19, novembre 1951, pp. 418-421.

⁵¹ It will be made plain as this article goes on that borrowing of Freudian terms does not signify any equivalence between Saint Thomas' principles and those of Freud.

⁵² I-II, 3:2 ad 4.

⁵³ I-II, 34:4 ad 3.

⁵⁴ I-II, 33:4; 4:1.

Thomas labels the good which is loved in every act, the 'bonum honestum,' considered as fitting, "what is desirable for its own sake (II-II, 145:3)." A good is 'useful' if desired as a means. A good is 'delectable' when it is desired as bringing to the subject's appetitive faculty its repose and satisfaction. It is 'honestum' when it is willed as the *res* which is the complete and final goal of the activity of the intellectual appetite.⁵⁵ 'The useful' is desired only by a practical reference to another good; 'the pleasant' is desirable only for the enjoyment it procures. The honest good is desirable because of the goodness it⁵⁶ possesses in itself.

This does not mean that the 'virtuous' or 'honest' good is not pleasant. Every virtuous or honest good is pleasant,⁵⁷ it is more pleasing than the 'pleasurable good,'⁵⁸ but the pleasure it procures is not willed primarily for its own sake. What is willed is this object itself for its intrinsic goodness, for that in it which is "excellent and worthy of honor because of its spiritual beauty."⁵⁹

The 'honest good' is the specific object of intellectual appetite; the pleasurable good, that of sensitive appetite.⁶⁰ The human act, therefore, can be characterized by this attitude that it takes in regard to its object: a 'gratuitous' attitude, one that could be called esthetic. Goodness and Beauty coincide. Though joy is not absent from the moral act, it is not sought as an end in itself—the moral act is love of the honest good.

9) It is this 'honest good' which qualifies the love of friendship. According to Aristotle's well known definition,⁶¹ "to love is to wish good to some one." The

good thing, whatever it may be, is willed only in reference to the other's person. The love directed to that person is the love of friendship. There can be love of concupiscence in regard to the things wished for another.⁶² But the love of the intellectual appetite bearing upon the 'honest good' has the person as term of its action. Friendship that is merely useful or pleasurable is not true friendship.⁶³ True friendship does not avail itself of the friend, it goes out to him not as source of usefulness or of pleasure; it is drawn to him by the goodness which he possesses. Friendship exists between one person and another (or several others). It is extended to the person himself, first of all for his good qualities, but also for all that he is, which includes even his faults.⁶⁴ Friendship is directed to the person, and even to the other persons with whom he is associated, such as his children and his friends,⁶⁵ and this love of friendship is necessarily reciprocal.⁶⁶

3. *The Human Act and the Reaches of Its Domain*

It is not the hand that strikes; it is this man who is striking with his hand. It is not the intelligence that understands; it is this man who understands by means of his intellect. *Actiones sunt suppositorum.*⁶⁷ This is eminently true in the case of a human act: it is not the will that acts, it is this man willing, and doing so freely. There is a human act only if the subject, in as much as he is endowed with intelligence and free will, resolves of himself to posit the act.

Acts on a lower level are definitely mine. Certainly, it is I who digest, I

⁵⁵ I, 5:6 ad 2.

⁵⁶ I, 5:6 ad 2.

⁵⁷ II-II, 145:3.

⁵⁸ II-II, 26:12.

⁵⁹ II-II, 145:3.

⁶⁰ II-II, 145:3 ad 1.

⁶¹ Aristotle, *Rhetorica*, 2:4.

⁶² I-II, 26:4 ad 1.

⁶³ I-II, 26:4 ad 3.

⁶⁴ II-II, 23:1 ad 3.

⁶⁵ II-II, 23:1 ad 1.

⁶⁶ *Ethic*, VIII, 2; *S. Th.*, I-II, 65:5.

⁶⁷ II-II, 58:2, etc.

who daydream, but in themselves these acts do not involve me as a human person. By human acts alone does man act in his status as man. Furthermore, what distinguishes him (and what at birth is only in a state of potentiality) becomes actual through these same acts. Man makes himself by undertaking human acts which, little by little as they multiply, construct the organism of virtues by which the subject is more and more 'disposed' to act in his capacity as a human person, and in this way everything in him becomes integrated.⁶⁸

Each human act puts a little more order into the rich chaos of our personal being. This order consists in an internal harmonizing of our tendencies so that each plays its own role in harmony by exercising its common finality—by relating the subject to another being than himself, that is to say, to God.

Now if we wish to assign an end to any whole and to the parts of the whole, we shall find, first, that each and every part exists for the sake of its proper act (as the eye for the act of seeing); secondly, that less honorable parts exist for the more honorable (as the senses for the intellect); and, thirdly, that all parts are for the perfection of the whole (as the matter for the form...); finally, the whole man on account of his extrinsic end: possession of God.⁶⁹

The unity of the human person, in itself and *ad extra*, is constituted, in short, by an hierarchical organization of ends. This explains the unifying and integrating role of the human act. It is essentially a love of the ultimate end; then, under the direction of the final end, of the partial ends and means adopted to reach the final end of a life

specifically human. Just as the eye sees for the benefit of the whole body, the intelligence understands and the will chooses for the entire man.⁷⁰ Each appetite desires the good proper to it. Sensitive appetite seeks its pleasure, but the will is obliged to present to sensitive appetite a superior and ultimate end. This permits the lower appetite, while exercising always its own dynamism, to surpass itself.

It is in this way that the person finds its unity, from the point of view of object as well as that of subject.⁷¹ From the point of view of object, there is unity because, in the final analysis, from beginning to end, of all the particular goods which attract him,⁷² the person loves but one thing: universal transcendent goodness willed as final end. In itself, the person has unity because, to the degree in which the person brings itself to will the good, it offers all the other appetites a superior end which transcends them and binds them permanently together. It is not only the sensitive appetite which desires; the will elects this desire and makes it its own. Thus the sensitive appetite becomes, as it were, 'human.' It is by this indirect process that the sphere of the passions is integrated into the person; it is incorporated by the same stroke into the moral sphere. These 'humanized' passions are the objects of the virtues of temperance and fortitude.

This extension of the human act to a sphere which is, on the plane of essences inferior to it, is termed *imperium* by Saint Thomas. *Imperium*, by which infra-human acts are raised to the human level, is the joint operation of rational intelligence and will.⁷³ By that operation the sphere of human acts

⁶⁸ Cf. the classical thesis on the connection of the virtues: I-II, 65; also, A. Plé., O.P. "La vertu de chastité," *Supplément de la Vie Spirituelle*, No. 36, février 1956, pp. 31-41.

⁶⁹ I, 65, 2; cf. I-II, 55:2 ad 1.

⁷⁰ I-II, 17:5 ad 2; 10:1.

⁷¹ I-II, 55:1 ad 1.

⁷² I-II 9:1; 73:3 ad 1; 114:4.

⁷³ I-II, 17:1.

(therefore, of morality) is not limited to acts 'elicited' by the will (that is, to those which emanate from the rational appetite as such),⁷⁴ but reaches out to include the sensitive appetites as well. These, while of the same nature as those found among animals, transcend those of the animals by their natural capacity (as faculties of a human subject) to lend themselves actively to the *imperium* of reason and will. To go farther, the sensitive appetite can become the principle of a human act.⁷⁵ Therefore it is the human act which is the integrating factor in the human person.

Its extension to sensitive appetite gives the action of the will not only greater scope but greater intensity. To tend toward the good, not only by the movement of the will (prerequisite and sufficient for the act to be human),⁷⁶ but also by the movement of the passion which the will carries along and animates—this is the sign of a more intense will.⁷⁷

By double title, then, the integration of passion with the human act renders the human act more perfect.

THE HUMAN ACT AND ITS INFERIOR ANALOGUES

1. *Imperfect Acts of the Will*

It is by a sort of participation of the lower appetite in the higher that a passion can become—as in the case of acts of temperance or fortitude—the principle of human acts.

When this occurs, there may be observed the essence and the specific qualities of the human act but, in virtue of *imperium*, they then radiate beyond the domain determined by and proper to the

will. Freedom of the will is exercised in this process by the will taking the objectives of the passions as material and making these objectives its own (or by rejecting them). This potentiality of passion to be the principle of human acts deposits us on the road which must be travelled now: the path or participation, with its several stages, of the will-act (which is the human act) in the realms of sense appetite.

With the animal, sensitive appetite tends towards objects perceived and appreciated through sense knowledge; it tends in a determined and necessary manner and not by a 'free choice' (*ex iudicio libero*). But, in man, this movement of the sense appetite shares in a certain way in the freedom of the will (*in hominibus aliquid libertatis participat*).⁷⁸

A particular example will illustrate the first degree of participation of sense appetite in the will-act—"a sin of passion."⁷⁹ Saint Thomas declares that there cannot be mortal sin in the order of *sensualitas*. The reason is that, for an act to be morally good or bad, it must be ordained to an end recognized as such and *sensualitas*, in itself, is incapable of effecting such a recognition. That is the prerogative of the will.⁸⁰

A mortal sin can arise from sensuality only if the reason ordains the will to will as end the satisfaction of the movement of sensuality. In a lapidary statement, Saint Thomas puts everything into place: "The cause of sin is the will (as accomplishing what gives the act its sinful character), the reason (as failing to supply to the act the direction proper to it), and the appetite (as seducing to sin)."⁸¹

⁷⁴ Cf. III *Sent.*, 23, 1:1; *De virt. in comm.*, 4; A. Plé, "La vertu de chastité," *op.cit.*, p. 17.

⁷⁵ I-II, 74:3 ad 1.

⁷⁶ I-II, 10:3 ad 3.

⁷⁷ I-II, 24:3 ad 1; 59:5.

⁷⁸ I-II, 26:1.

⁷⁹ I-II, 6:7 ad 1 & ad 2; 9:2; 10:3; 17:7; 74:4; 77:1 1-8; 89:5. *etc.*

⁸⁰ I-II, 74:4.

⁸¹ I-II, 75:3.

This seduction and inclination of the sense appetite can completely blot-out or partially restrict the operation of rational intelligence and will. In the second case, the human act is imperfect.⁸² The proof that this act is not perfectly human lies in the fact that the will takes no joy in it; on the contrary, it is saddened: "He who sins in passion commits the sin with a certain remorse and a certain grief, while he who sins in virtue of free choice (*ex electione*) delights in the very fact that he is committing a sin."⁸³

When an act is imperfectly 'human,' it remains human just the same: it is so by a sort of debased participation. This degraded type of participation would require a lengthy exposition so it will suffice here just to cite its principal degree.

An act, to be voluntary, must have its principle within itself and must have as object an end known and willed as such. Animals perceive an end but they do not perceive it as end; they tend towards it immediately and necessarily. In other words, they are incapable of voluntary actions in the specific and perfect meaning of the word. However, Saint Thomas is following Aristotle when he says that there is something of the voluntary in the animal in as much as its appetite tends towards an end. This does not attest the essence of the voluntary but represents a low grade of participation in the voluntary; therefore something 'imperfectly voluntary'⁸⁴ is involved.

It is the same on the plane of knowledge. What comes to us from the senses, according to Saint Thomas, is endowed with a "certain imperfect (deficient) participation in intelligence."⁸⁵ This inferior participation of intelligence and

will in *sensualitas* is a higher activity than that of *sensualitas* in the animal. It is true that the type of instinctive judgment, by which the animal gauges whether something is good for him or not, exists also in man, but with man, this instinctive judgment is enriched by a process which participates somehow in reason. In man it sets up some sort of coalition, not between universal ideas, as the rational intelligence would do, but between representations of concrete individual objects. "Called in animals the 'estimative' sense, the power of sensitive judgment in man is for this reason called the 'cogitative sense' or 'particular judgment'."⁸⁶

It is the same memory which, in man, goes through rational and syllogistic process in recollecting the past. For this reason, Saint Thomas calls the operation 'reminiscence.'⁸⁷

We refer to these positions taken by Aristotelian and Thomistic philosophy solely for the purpose of focusing on the principle that interests us here—that of ontological participation of the lower powers in intelligence and will.

Sense knowledge in man, while remaining 'animal,' is experienced in a higher mode (cogitative, not estimative; reminiscence, not memory). It is the same with sense appetite.

This aptitude of sense appetite to participate in the activity of the will is a natural aptitude.⁸⁸ And this natural aptitude has degrees of explicitness in exercise, a fact which enables us to observe a full range of participation. The highest degree is attained, as already mentioned, in the acts of the virtues of temperance and fortitude, that is to say, when the concupiscible and

⁸² I-II, 11:2.

⁸³ *In I Cor.*, 13:2.

⁸⁴ I-II, 6:2.

⁸⁵ I, 77:7.

⁸⁶ I, 78:4. Cf. A. Plé, "Saint Thomas d'Aquin et la psychologie des profondeurs," *op.cit.*, p. 425.

⁸⁷ I, 78:4.

⁸⁸ I-II, 74:3 ad 1.

irascible passions, doing their part from within, without constraint or conflict, collaborating with voluntary appetency, become principles of human acts.⁸⁰ As a matter of fact, in the temperate man and the man of fortitude, the passions themselves become virtues. The virtue of temperance is nothing more than a desire—in the order of passion—but a desire befitting a man in so far as he is man.⁸⁰ Such participation is the ideal and rarely (if ever) attained, at least to the degree where it is stable, perfectly integrated, and exercised with the facility which constitutes virtue a *habitus*.

Be that as it may, Saint Thomas, in several places of the *Summa Theologica*, marks out for observation some passions which he declares to be morally good even if they cannot be called virtues. They seek objects which are good, but in a mode imperfectly or incompletely 'human.' For example, there is the case of natural modesty and of *honestas* (self-respect), which are only incomplete virtues;⁸¹ or other examples just as apt—pity not informed by charity,⁸² 'sensible' contrition,⁸³ a vindictiveness,⁸⁴ and the like. These passions, 'imperfect virtues' or 'seeds of virtue,' are linked to temperamental traits which make a man more or less likely to be, for example, mild-tempered or irascible.⁸⁵ It is the same case for habits and customs transmitted through family and social environment

and by the laws under which one lives. The dispositions governed by all these determinants extrinsic to the will are not, in themselves, human acts, yet they can become such if the will makes them its own. Still—and this happens more readily and frequently—they may rise no higher than to a single degree of inferior participation with the will. Take, for example, any of those passions, good in itself, when it takes a stand on the level of only imperfectly human acts. An attitude of natural modesty is easier but less human than an act of the virtue of chastity.

2. Sub-human Conduct

In every degree of this low grade of participation in the human act one can speak of the pseudo-moral or the incompletely moral, or better still, the sub-moral (when one speaks of the sub-conscious) or, again, the pre-moral. Conduct on this level does not fulfill the requirements of the essence and specific qualities of a human act. But this conduct may genetically prepare the way for a human act and, when that is attained, serve as its material foundation and expression.

What are the specific qualities, what are the criteria of sub-human conduct; or, to use Saint Thomas' terminology, the criteria of the imperfect human act?⁸⁶

1) This type of behavior does not have fully within itself the true principle of its activity; it is not voluntary in the sense stated above. Here we have the most specific criterion,⁸⁷ even though, in the concrete, the task of ascertaining it is not always easy—the subject's interior feeling of being free can be his own illusion.

2) The same can be said concerning

⁸⁰ Cf. note 74.

⁸⁰ I, 95:2 ad 3.

⁸¹ Cf. A. Plé, "La vertu de chastité," *op.cit.*, pp. 23-31.

⁸² II-II, 30:3.

⁸³ III *Suppl.*, 1:2, 1. Saint Thomas does not make contrition a separate virtue but an act of the virtue of penance. What is particularly to the point here is that Saint Thomas recognizes the existence of "sensible" contrition which he distinguishes from "virtuous" contrition, essentially sorrow of the will: 3:1; 4:1.

⁸⁴ II-II, 108:1; 108:2 ad 2.

⁸⁵ A. Plé, "Saint Thomas d'Aquin et la psychologie des profondeurs," *op.cit.*, pp. 413-415.

⁸⁶ I-II, 88:2.

⁸⁷ *De Veritate*, XXII, 4 ad 1.

the willing of the end—sub-human conduct is, indeed, directed to some definite end, but that end is not fully recognized, evaluated and willed as such. This is especially so when there is question of the ultimate end which presupposes, if the act is to be truly human, knowledge and love of an object, a particular one, of course, but perceived and loved in the universality and the transcendence already discussed. To return to Professor de Greeff's example: a man, unless he rises above the level of sub-human conduct, is fighting for his own freedom and not for his enemy's freedom also. He lives in a 'closed' morality; not, in an 'open' one. He is not making his return to God by a specifically human route; rather, he turns back and has his sights on man (individual or collective).

3) Another criterion: man's attitude when he confronts pleasure. The sensible good is the pleasurable good.⁹⁸ On the sub-human level, man acts in view of pleasure, whether it be immediate or indirect, present or delayed.⁹⁹ It has been shown that such is not the case on the plane of the human act whose specific object is the honest good.

4) The human act is not merely oblation, it supposes friendship, which connotes reciprocity of affection between persons. Sub-human conduct is always 'interested,' self-seeking, even in its friendships.

5) The human act is objective. It proceeds from an objective knowledge of the object and of the means to be taken for attainment of that object. Therefore it is precisely adapted to its end and all circumstances involved. Just the opposite, sub-human conduct derives from knowledge too rooted in the senses, only slightly disengaged from the cogitative sense and, therefore, too subjective to yield to reality or to pass judgment with

full objectivity on the moral value of the end and its means. It adapts poorly and turns back more or less completely on itself, away from its objective. The sub-human derives from an imperfect judgment of good and evil. For example, pudency will rate sins of the flesh worse than sins of pride,¹⁰⁰ and, among sexual sins, will judge those more serious which are not really so, but are public.¹⁰¹

6) Granted that the human act is adaptive and even, in certain cases, calculable, it is always original because always free. On the contrary, sub-human conduct is always more or less automatic, stereotyped, predictable, because the sensible 'appetite' is determined to only one thing or only one line of conduct—the reverse of the human act, even when it has a passion as principle.¹⁰²

7) Sub-human conduct proceeds less from love than from fear. Thus pudency is fear rising from shame, felt especially in terms of one's surroundings. It urges concealment for a bad action.¹⁰³ This means living under a morality of social pressure, according to a 'closed' morality. Analogical characteristics can be found in that 'good passion,' the sense of honor (*honestas*).¹⁰⁴ When it inspires certain lines of conduct, in spite of their moral goodness, inasmuch as they have not a specifically and completely moral value, these lines of conduct do not meet the absolute requirements of a human act.

8) Another criterion of sub-human conduct: whereas the human act is accompanied by joy, a token of beatitude and a sign that man is fulfilling himself according to his specific nature and is well started on the right road leading

⁹⁸ I, 59:4 ad 3.

⁹⁹ I-II, 4:2, ad 2.

¹⁰⁰ II-II, 144:2 ad 1.

¹⁰¹ II-II, 151:4.

¹⁰² I-II, 50:3.

¹⁰³ Cf. A. Plé, "La vertu de chastité," *op.cit.*, pp. 24-25.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

to God—sub-human conduct, denoting a life on the level of passion, is accompanied by conflicts, internal struggle, sadness. The fact is that, when there is not perfect virtue (when there is not a ratifying participation with intellectual appetite rendering the passions capable of a human act), the passions, if they do submit to the will, do so with repugnance. As Saint Thomas puts it, they suffer violence and the results are sadness and difficulties.¹⁰⁵

9) This list of the moral inadequacies of sub-human conduct could be lengthened so as to include some practical observations. Especially noticeable in this conduct is the complete lack of personal integration, not to mention a certain disintegration, as well as illusions about self brought on through a life dominated by sensitive appetite, notably by concupiscence. Before Freud, Saint Thomas had pointed out that lust does not show itself at once; it makes its way slowly, trying to hide itself, to disguise itself; it creeps in sorrowfully; *concupiscentia quaerit latebras et dolose subintrat*.¹⁰⁶

3. Pre-human Conduct

Sub-human conduct can also be called pre-human in the sense that, in the genesis of the human act, it precedes the human act and prepares the stage for it.

Saint Thomas does not pay much attention to this genetic aspect of a moral act (it did not appeal to the mentality of his epoch or to those earlier). However, he does lay down some principles which are useful.

On the plane of essences, the intellectual powers (knowledge and appetite) precede the sensitive and vegetative powers in dignity.¹⁰⁷ From this derives their

precedence as regards both final end and active principle.

Those powers of the soul which have priority in the order of perfection and of nature, are the principles of others in the manner of efficient and final causes. For we see that the senses are for the intelligence and not the other way about (I, 77:7).

In *via generationis*, the order is reversed. The vegetative powers come before the sensitive powers; the first prepare the body for the activity of the second.¹⁰⁸ It is the same for the sensitive powers in relation to the intellectual powers; the former are as matter and subject of activity of the latter. What is born and grows, is the animal, later the man: "The animal is generated before the man."¹⁰⁹ This is the regular process of nature.¹¹⁰

It is not a case of "the greater coming from the lesser." It is natural for man that his higher powers proceed by intermediary action of his lower powers.¹¹¹ But, from the genetic viewpoint, it can be said that the greater proceeds from the less in this sense, that the lesser prepares and implements the activity of the greater. The Gospel parable of the seed can be cited. The soil nourishes and conditions the growth of the seed (Matthew 13:8-8), altering it somewhat. Taking human nature, our hereditary endowment, as a whole, the seed and the soil—in proportion as the soil enriches itself, absorbs the fertilizer, the seed planted there will bud forth and grow. This does not mean the same essence for seed and soil but, in man's case, they belong to the same nature, they constitute specifically the same individual subject.

For the intellectual powers to achieve a certain perfection in their activities, it

¹⁰⁵ III *Sent.*, XXIII, 1:1.

¹⁰⁶ II-II, 156:4.

¹⁰⁷ I, 77:4.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁹ I, 77:7.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

is necessary that the inferior powers have attained, beforehand, to development, if not complete, at least adequate. It is significant that Saint Thomas raises this point when referring to beatitude. According to him, sensible happiness is not necessary for the ultimate beatitude of heaven; the glorified body's inferior powers share in the happiness of the intellectual powers by a kind of redundancy or overflow.¹¹² But, on this earth, it is very true (as he says refuting the objector) that operation of the senses is required, not essentially but accidentally, and, consequently they are necessary for the imperfect happiness possible in this life. Man advances from the perfection of the lower part to the perfection of the higher.¹¹³

Understanding of the *via generationis* is, therefore, of prime importance in a study of the human act from the concrete, pedagogical and pastoral point of view. Moral theology should study in greatest detail the development of intellectual powers as dependent on the vegetative and sensitive powers, not only in connection with the imperfect will-act which prepares the child for his first human act, and not only in connection with this first act itself, but also in relation to the progress in virtue, thanks to which the adolescent, then the man, reaches a stable and established state of interior liberty. It is one thing to be capable of performing one's first human act; it is something else to be able to perform such an act often and consistently each time a situation calls for it. The latter ability reveals a perfection of virtue which, by the improvement it brings about in the powers, establishes a firm and stable control by rational intelligence and appetite.

Between the child's first human act

and the perfection of virtue lie many intermediary situations, among which Saint Thomas singles out adolescence for special attention, to the minimum age to contract marriage or enter religion. For the majority of children (even if they have achieved their first human act), control by reason and its appetite is not sufficiently established, extended and stabilized to make one master of himself and his act (to which is added his legal position as a minor) for him to be able to 'bind himself' in a definitive state of life.¹¹⁴ From this may be concluded that the 'age of reason' stretches from the moment of the first human act to the acquisition of self-control sufficient to commit one's entire self.

Four stages can be marked off schematically for this moral growth of man:

1) In early childhood, the intelligence not being sufficiently developed, there is not yet any human act and, therefore, no moral life. The efforts the child makes to be well-behaved are on the level of the pre-moral (of the super-ego in the Freudian hypothesis).

2) The child's development attains the level where he is capable of his first human act. For the first time, according to the capacities of his age, he discovers an ultimate and universal end in relation to which he decides by himself about his life.

3) Human acts multiply and, because of this, virtuous habits come to birth and develop. He thus acquires some worthy 'dispositions' which orient him in a steady manner towards his final end. His capacity for performing human acts grows increasingly perfect, which means more and more free. But he has not yet attained to the perfection of virtue. He has, perhaps, attained the virtue of continency, but his virtue of chastity is still imperfect. His will is well oriented towards the ultimate end

¹¹² A. Plé, "Saint Thomas d'Aquin et la psychologie des profondeurs," *op. cit.*, p. 426.

¹¹³ I-II, 3:3 ad 1 & ad 3.

¹¹⁴ II-II, 88:8 ad 2; 88:9.

that befits him, but still feebly. His passions are not integrated by the will. In some circumstances, reason and will are dominated by the life of passion; in others, they dominate his life. He is divided.¹¹⁵ He has an authentic moral life but he is not yet completely detached from his sub-moral life. His daily conduct proceeds from a variable combination of infantile and adult morality, subhuman morality and morality properly human. As will be indicated later, it is echoing Saint Thomas to say that the majority of men tarry at this intermediary, confused stage.

4) The virtues have fully developed to form an organized whole. Man is always ready to act as befits man. He possesses on a firm, stable basis a control over his actions which extends to every possible field of activity. Here is the summit of the *via generationis* in the moral life by which man, according to that which distinguishes his specific nature, makes his way to his Creator.

4. *The Human Act and its Inferior Analogues*

Returning to the plane of essences, it is well to have recourse to an extremely useful concept from metaphysics so as to understand the human act and assign it the proper place in relation to sub-human lines of conduct. The notion suggested is that of analogy.

Applying it here, we have only to fall back on a very apt lead from Charles Henry Nodet, who in 1948¹¹⁶ proposed the same notion to clarify the so-called moral behavior of the child throughout the different stages of growth until maturity is reached. The same approach has been used by the Irish Capuchin,

Father Dempsey, in his recent work,¹¹⁷ where he proposes the use of analogy when treating of love (the analogy of libido to the pure love of charity).

A metaphysical analogy is valid when the same word or concept can be used to designate several realities, distinct in themselves but possessing a certain similarity. An example is the concept of Being, which is validly predicated of God, man, stone. They all exist. But each exists in a different way. God's manner of existence is essentially different from that of man, which, again, is not that of stone. But there is something common to them which allows all of them to be said to exist—there is analogy. Each can be called an 'analogue,' God being the supreme analogue (the concept of Being verified in Him to an eminent degree) and men and stones only inferior analogues because they share in Being in a definitely lower manner.¹¹⁸

For our present purpose, this concept of analogy is qualified to denote what is essentially different yet at the same common between the 'superior analogue'—the human act strictly speaking—and those more or less low-grade participations which have been designated here as sub-human or pre-human. Everything falls into place, at least speculatively, if these last two are classified as inferior analogues of the human act.

SUB-HUMAN LINES OF CONDUCT

Knowledge of the human act and of sub-human lines of conduct, such as this article has endeavored to convey, will make it possible to understand the psychology of the unconscious so well

¹¹⁵ I-II, 10:3 ad 2.

¹¹⁶ Dr. Charles Henri Nodet, "Vie affective infantile et vie morale adulte, notions analogues" *Supplément de la Vie Spirituelle*, No. 4, février 1948, pp. 390-410.

¹¹⁷ Peter J. A. Dempsey, O.F.M., Cap., *Freud, Psychoanalysis, Catholicism*, Regnery, Chicago, 1957, p. 63.

¹¹⁸ H.-D. Gardeil, O.P., *Initiation à la philosophie de Saint Thomas d'Aquin*, t. IV; *Métophysique*, 2e édition, Ed. du Cerf, 1953, pp. 34 et sq.

described and discussed by Freud and his successors—and to allot it the place it deserves.

As said above, Dr. Odier has laid down broad lines of discernment of morality as it stems from two sources, conscious and unconscious. It would seem that Saint Thomas, though favorable to this dichotomy, goes on to give a better conception of morality than that derived by Dr. Odier from duty and conscience. It is not the task of the non-psychoanalyst to carp at the data reported by Dr. Odier and his analyses of these data. But the theologian, after reading Dr. Odier's study, finds himself in a position, and on solid ground, to take a stand for comparing what concerns him as moralist with what concerns the psychoanalyst.

It seems that Freud and his successors (speaking only of those in the movement of contemporary psychology and psychiatry) do not concern themselves with what is true and false in the Freudian approach. Such a reader benefits by a research hypothesis workable on the level of observation as well as that of theory, which can be invoked to redirect and extend (also improve, perhaps) therapeutic technique and especially psychological theory. It is evident that Freud made no distinction between the human act and its analogues. He was almost exclusively preoccupied with the latter. But it would be over-simplifying his attitude—and perhaps falsifying it—to declare that he denied the existence of the human act. Generally, his writings are silent on this point, or, if he does speak of it, he is confused and contradictory. We shall take only a few examples.

On one hand he professes an unqualified determinism:

Once before I presumed to challenge your deep-rooted conviction about freedom and psychological spontaneity and I said, at the time, that such a belief is entirely anti-sci-

entific and should give way before the claims of psychic determinism.¹¹⁹

On the other hand, he says of liberty: "We must recognize here a measure of freedom which psychoanalysis is powerless to reduce."¹²⁰

He speaks of self-control:

It is well known that the ideal case for an analyst is one where a client, who possesses self-control and is suffering from some interior conflict which he cannot resolve, brings his trouble to the psychoanalyst and asks his assistance.¹²¹

Freud grants a definite, elevated position to culture, art, even to morality and religion, to which he attributes the birth and development of the ego—and in terms which seem to convey partially what we have called the human act.

...Starting from conscious perception, the ego has brought under its influence ever larger regions and ever deeper layers of the id; and, in the persistence with which it maintains its dependence upon the external world, it bears the indelible stamp of

119 Freud, *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, in *The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud*, translated by A. A. Brill, New York, Modern Library, 1938, p. 161 f.

120 Freud, *Leonardo da Vinci*, *Modern Library*, 1957.

121 Sigmund Freud, *Collected Papers*, vol. II, Hogarth Press, London, 1953, p. 205. Also may be quoted: "Let us see now what becomes of unconscious wishes when liberated by psychoanalysis. By what means can they be rendered inoffensive? We recognize three. Most frequently it happens that these desires are simply suppressed by reflection during the process of the cure. In this case, repression is replaced by critical analysis and rejection. This critical judgment comes more readily in so far as it bears on matter from an infantile period of the ego. Formerly, the individual, weak and incompletely developed, incapable of putting up an adequate fight against the yearning which is impossible to fulfill, was only able to repress the yearning. At present, in his full maturity, he is capable of controlling it." In *Psychologie collective et analyse du moi*, in volume *Essais de psychanalyse*, Payot, p. 174.

its origin (as it might be "Made in Germany"). Its psychological function consists in raising the processes in the id to a higher dynamic level (perhaps by transforming freely mobile into bound energy, such as corresponds to the preconscious condition); its constructive function consists in interposing, between the demand made by an instinct and the action that satisfies it, an intellectual activity which, after considering the present state of things and weighing up earlier experiences, endeavors by means of experimental actions to calculate the consequences of the proposed line of conduct. In this way the ego comes to a decision...¹²²

Freud goes so far as to write: "The ego represents what we call reason and sanity, in contrast to the id which is dominated by the passions."¹²³

Psychoanalysis has been reproached time after time with ignoring the higher, moral, spiritual side of human nature. The reproach is doubly unjust, both historically and methodologically. For, in the first place, we have from the very beginning attributed the function of instigating repression to the moral and aesthetic tendencies in the ego, and secondly, there has been a general refusal to recognize that psycho-analytic research could not produce a complete and finished body of doctrine, like a philosophical system, ready-made, but had to find its way step by step along the path towards understanding the intricacies of the mind by making an analytic dissection of both normal and abnormal phenomena. So long as the study of the repressed part of the mind was our task, there was no need for us to feel any agitated apprehensions about the existence of the higher side of the mental life. But now that we have embarked upon the analysis of the ego we can give an

answer to all those whose moral sense has been shocked and who have complained that there must surely be a higher nature in man: 'Very true,' we can say, 'and here we have that higher nature, in this ego-ideal or super-ego, the representative of our relation to our parents...'¹²⁴

Freud insists that the "ego-ideal answers in every way to what is expected of the higher nature of man"¹²⁵ and that the normal development of the ego is in the nature of moral progress:

... The ego develops from perceiving instincts to controlling them, from obeying instincts to curbing them. In this achievement, a large share is taken by the ego-ideal, which indeed is partly a reaction-formation against the instinctual processes in the id. Psychoanalysis is an instrument to enable the ego to push its conquest of the id further still.¹²⁶

Freud recognizes that joy in intellectual work has a special quality which he hopes some day to be able to define:

Another method of guarding against pain is by using libido-displacements that our mental equipment permits, by which it gains so greatly in flexibility. The task is then one of transferring the instinctual aims into such directions that they cannot be frustrated by the outer world. Sublimation of the instincts lends an aid in this. Its success is greatest when a man knows how to heighten sufficiently his capacity for obtaining pleasure from mental and intellectual work. Fate has little power against him there. This kind of satisfaction, such as the artist's joy in creation, in embodying his phantasies, or the scientist's in solving problems or discovering truth, has a special quality which we shall certainly one day be able to define metaphysically. Until then we can only say metaphorically it seems to us 'higher and finer,' but compared with that of gratifying gross primi-

¹²² Freud, *An Outline of Psycho-analysis*, authorized translation by James Strachey, London, Hogarth, 1949, p. 69 f.

¹²³ Sigmund Freud, *The Ego and the Id*; authorized translation by Joan Riviere, London, Hogarth, 1950, p. 30.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 46 f.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

tive instincts its intensity is tempered and diffused; it does not overwhelm us physically. The weak point of this method, however, is that it is not generally applicable; it is available only to the few. It presupposes special gifts and dispositions which are not very commonly found in a sufficient degree. And even to these few it does not secure complete protection against suffering; it gives no invulnerable armour against the arrows of fate, and it usually fails when a man's own body becomes a source of suffering to him.¹²⁷

He likewise recognizes the existence of altruistic love:

...we may expect that within the very period of life which we reckon as childhood, altruistic impulses and morality will awake in the little egoist, and that . . . a secondary ego will overlay and inhibit the primary ego.¹²⁸

He enlarges the concept of libido to dimensions of love such as were taught and lived, not only by Plato, but Saint Paul¹²⁹ and also Saint Francis of Assisi although he remarks that:

A small minority are enabled by their constitution nevertheless to find happiness along the path of love; but far-reaching mental transformations of the erotic function are necessary before this is possible. These people make themselves independent of their object's acquiescence by transferring the main value from the fact of being loved to their own act of loving; they protect themselves against loss of it by attaching their love not to individual objects but to all men equally, and they avoid the uncertainties and disappointments of genital love by turning away from its sexual aim and modifying the instinct into an

impulse with an *inhibited aim*. The state which they induce in themselves by this process—an unchangeable, undeviating, tender attitude—has little superficial likeness to the stormy vicissitudes of genital love, from which nevertheless it is derived. It seems that Saint Francis of Assisi may have carried this method of using love to produce an inner feeling of happiness as far as anyone; what we are thus characterizing as one of the procedures by which the pleasure-principle fulfills itself has in fact been linked up in many ways with religion; the connection between them may lie in those remote regions of the mind where the distinctions between the ego and objects and between the various objects become matters of indifference. From one ethical standpoint, the deeper motivation of which will later become clear to us, this inclination towards an all-embracing love of others and of the world at large is regarded as the highest state of mind of which man is capable.¹³⁰

The question arises whether Freud would have noticed and recognized a true human act. It is very evident that he had experienced them himself in his own life, but in his writings he scarcely mentions them unless it is to trim them down systematically to what we have called the human act's preparatory stages in the *via generationis*. Culture seems to be for him only the end-product of eros-sublimation; religion, an infantile obsessional neurosis; morality, the dissociative aggressive conflict of the super-ego with the ego. With Freud, morality seems to be only restriction of the instincts, prohibitions, categorical imperatives.¹³¹ The ego-ideal, also, is prohibi-

¹²⁷ Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, op. cit., p. 69 f.

¹²⁸ Sigmund Freud, *Interpretation of Dreams*, in *Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud*, op.cit., p. 299.

¹²⁹ Sigmund Freud, *Psychologie collective et analyse du moi*, op. cit., p. 37 f.

¹³¹ The reader can judge by phrases such as these: "From the point of view of morality, the control and restriction of instinct, it may be said of the id that it is totally non-moral, and of the super-ego that it can be hyper-moral . . . But even ordinary normal morality has a harshly restraining, cruelly prohibiting quality . . . the

tory.¹³² Since conscience is to Freud a function of the super-ego, it has for him the same characteristics (restraint from without, restriction of instincts, need of punishment, etc.).¹³³

This reduction process, practically constant with Freud, going from more to less, from superior to inferior, appears to us both valid and invalid. It is valid if the fact is kept in mind that Freud is a medical man looking for a therapy applicable to neurotics. From this point of view, he has a right to narrow his study to what he calls "ordinary normal morality,"¹³⁴ which means the code of the majority of people, or "what the ordinary man conceives when he speaks of religion."¹³⁵ The theologian should not forget that Saint Thomas himself observed sadly, over and over again, that the majority of men live on the level of their passions; that Saint Thomas states precisely that these men are puppets under the sway of cosmic forces¹³⁶ and Satan's activity, which have not the least power over human acts but influence the imagination and the sensitive appetite¹³⁷—we would change the terminology and say that they influence sub-human conduct and the inferior analogues of human act. Rare (*pauci, pauciores*, writes

source of the general character of harshness and cruelty exhibited by the ideal—its dictatorial 'Thou shalt.' " (*The Ego and the Id*, op. cit., p. 79 f.) Many other passages could be quoted where morality is presented along these lines, especially *Totem and Taboo*.

¹³² "Since the ego-ideal connotes the sum-total of all the restrictions to which the individual must submit . . .," Sigmund Freud, *Psychologie collective et analyse*, op. cit., p. 148.

¹³³ Cf. for example, Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, op. cit., pp. 105-122.

¹³⁴ Sigmund Freud, *The Ego and the Id*, op. cit., p. 80.

¹³⁵ Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, op. cit., p. 23.

¹³⁶ S. Th., I, 115:4 ad 3; I-II, 9:5 ad 3; II-II, 95:5 ad 2; S.C.G., 3:85.

¹³⁷ I-II, 80:1-4; II-II, 95:5; S.C.G., 3:92.

¹³⁸ S. Th., I-II, 73:3, etc.

Saint Thomas) are those men who raise themselves above this level.

To take a typical example—the majority of men who are commonly recognized as 'moral,' remaining, where matters of sexual morality are concerned, on the level of decency and *honestas*, do not rise to the regular practice of the virtue of chastity. They live instead on the plane of sub-human acts, which, of course, does not prevent them from occasionally performing a human act.

Moral theology does present, and should, the ideal standards. The physician as such, and the same for the sociologist and the ethnologist, is concerned only with observation of facts. Now it cannot be denied that usually the moral conduct of the majority of men scarcely rises above the inferior analogues of the human act. Therefore, no one has a right to blame Freud for remarking on the circumstance, and it is to be wished that moralists would face up to the incontestable evidence, while the psychoanalysts, on their part, would not deny the possibility, let alone the existence, of human acts.

A further point—observation necessarily deals with the *via generationis* and we have seen that it can be affirmed, along with Saint Thomas, that on this plane, and in a definite mode, the greater derives from the lesser.

Finally, Freud was a physician of the mentally ill. With such patients, inasmuch as they are mental patients, the functioning and the sovereignty of the rational intelligence and its appetite are impaired.¹³⁸ With mental patients, even more than with the man in the street, 'moral' conduct can be (to put the matter at its best) only at the level of inferior analogues of the moral act.

For all these reasons, Freud's stand seems valid to us. But it fails to be so the moment he claims to give a complete and absolutely final explanation

of facts observed—in a word, as soon as he gives free rein to his tendency to philosophize, to set up a metaphysical system. To limit ourselves to just one example, we object when he writes:

...If we assume as a general hypothesis that the force behind all human activities is a striving towards the two convergent aims of profit and pleasure, we must then acknowledge this as valid for other manifestations of culture...¹³⁹

Freud is wrong when he ignores the 'honest good,' which, as we have seen, specifies the human act. By stopping short here, he confines his inquiries to the realm of sub-human morality, to the domain that Bergson called 'blind morality' (*la morale close*).

If we recall all that Freud has written depicting the evolution or involution of the ego and the super-ego (especially by reading or rereading his study entitled *The Ego and the Id*), it will be noted that, to the degree this process bears a 'moral' significance, his laws have characteristics analogous to those which Saint Thomas recognizes for sub-human acts. This is particularly clear-cut in regard to the imperfectly moral conduct of the (good) passion of shame or decency, which is specified by fear in relation to the animal appetite in man (and not by a participation of passion-love with intellectual love, which defines the virtue of chastity). Also, this fear has a parental or social reference. For, in so far as the sexual appetite is not modified from within by the 'order of reason,' it is not integrated to the human person in reference to what makes him human, and just so far is the sexual appetite incapable of a human act. It is a morality of imperative and categorical interdicts. The sexual appetite suffers violence; there is a conflict and distress.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, op. cit., p. 57 f.

¹⁴⁰ III *Sent.*, 23:1:1.

It is impossible to carry out in detail here a theological interpretation of Freudian findings on the plane of the human act's inferior analogues. Within the framework of one article we must be satisfied with having suggested just one theological principle which permits distinction between the true and the false in the Freudian approach.

By way of conclusion and to confirm the explanatory value of the analogy-principle just proposed, we would like to point out how harmful its neglect can be, and how such neglect opens the way to statements satisfactory neither to psychoanalysis nor to moral theology.

For example, Charleen Schwartz,¹⁴¹ full of good intentions in the rapport she establishes between Saint Thomas and Freud, writes that "Freud's super-ego corresponds to Aristotle's practical intellect" (p. 5); that the id, in the same way, "corresponds to animal appetite" (p. 7); and the ego "to the will" (p. 7). It is true that she takes care to state that the "correspondence" here involved is not an "identity" (p. 5), but she asserts that, even though the super-ego was not considered by Freud as an "essentially rational function," it is clear that he is describing this point of morality "almost exactly as a Thomist would" (p. 6). From this she deduces that "one part (?) of the super-ego is nothing else but moral conscience" (p. 8). Consequently, for her, "it is a failure to resolve intense conflicts of conscience which leads to neurosis" (p. 9), and therefore "a healthy moral judgment is indispensable for a good psychoanalyst" (p. 12). For "the neurotic cannot be cured until he is morally strengthened to the point where he can bring his emotions under the control of reason."¹⁴² In an article from which the last quotation was taken, the author re-

¹⁴¹ Charleen Schwartz, *Neurotic Anxiety*, Sheed & Ward, New York, 1954.

¹⁴² Charleen Schwartz, "The Confessor and the Analyst," *Integrity*, April 1956, 12-22.

peats this opinion emphatically, using italics for the last part to stress its importance to her: "Our position is that the psychiatrist cannot remove the psychological disorders without the moral re-education of the conscious normal part of the personality, because *the emotions are inhibited in the first place due to a moral weakness, that is, the moral ego in its weakness could only inhibit the emotions as a defense against carrying them out.*" (*Ibid.*, p. 13)

Here there is evident confusion between the human act and its inferior analogues. This results in bad theology and bad psychology and great danger on two levels, psychoanalytic therapy and direction of conscience.

The same kind of confusion exists in the work of Wilfried Daim¹⁴³ who, as a more or less loyal disciple of Kierkegaard and Heidegger on one side and of Freud on the other, thinks that "it is open-ness (*ouverture*) to the Absolute . . . which confers on man his specific character" (p. 275). There is some truth in this statement, but, lacking an analogical and genetic concept of the Absolute, Daim calls idolization (setting up an object as an absolute) what Freud calls fixation (p. 175). Consequently, according to Daim, the fixation of the foetus in the mother's womb is an "idolization." To assert, as he does, that the foetus is and should be in communication with the Absolute is a ludicrous blunder—even on the psychological plane—and explicable only because of the strictly univocal concept of the Absolute which Daim fashions for himself. On the contrary, it would be more enlightening to study this sense of the absolute, on the plane of essences, in its superior analogues and, on the plane of existence, in the *via generationis*.

¹⁴³ Wilfried Daim, *Transvaluation de la psychanalyse, l'homme et l'absolu*, Albin Michel, 1956.

Through his failure to do so, Daim draws conclusions as dangerous as those of Mrs. Schwartz:

Neurosis and, without any doubt, psychosis, are determined by a constellation which is both functional and religious. In this case, the determining element is the religious factor; however, the drive is supplied by impulses (p. 173).

He even goes so far as to say that "neurosis is, after all, a conflict with God" (p. 145). From which he draws the conclusion: "The day will finally come when everyone who takes himself seriously will submit to a psychoanalysis" (p. 77).

In spite of the sponsors' good intentions and their profession of Catholicism, stands like those taken by Mrs. Charleen Schwartz and Doctor Wilfried Daim—and we could quote others—seem to us as unfaithful to Freudian psychoanalysis as to theology (if not to Catholic theology, at least to Thomistic). They seem dangerous in their therapeutic as well as their pastoral applications.

It would seem that these errors could have been avoided if their authors had possessed the concept of the human act which we have set forth—and therefore the concept of a truly moral life. It would seem that the authors—by distinguishing the human act in its essence and its specific qualities from its more or less inferior or analogous participations, but uniting them through integration into one and the same person and seeing them in the progressive stages of their *via generationis*—would enlighten and satisfy the moral theologian as well as the psychoanalyst, be he 'humanist' or Christian. This concept offers one and all some research hypotheses and the possibility of co-operation on theoretical and practical planes, for which so many men of good will are groping.

translated by F. A. McGOWAN

PHENOMENOLOGY, PSYCHOANALYSIS, MODERN ART: THEIR COMMON ROOTS

LOUIS VAN HAECHT

IT HAS BEEN SAID, and repeated on a number of occasions, that there is no such thing as a phenomenological philosophy. Phenomenologists are united among themselves neither by the unity of a philosophical system, nor by the content of their philosophy. The only real tie, the only unity, is a similarity of descriptive method.¹ At first sight, these views seem evident, especially if we consider the great number of fundamental differences which divide those who profess this method. After a closer examination, however, we can no longer maintain that a formal or methodological character alone adequately defines the phenomenological stream. The more phenomenology becomes conscious of itself, the more it appears to stand out as a real phenomenological philosophy. It should be noted, by the way, that it is a matter here of an *implicit* philosophy rather than an elaborated system.

At the international colloquium on phenomenology held at Brussels in 1951, E. Fink undertook to show how the phenomenology of Husserl, while being an anti-speculative position, presupposes and implies certain speculative affirmations.² The value of phenomenology depends on certain epistemological and metaphysical positions which it does not justify by its own methods. Fink singled

out notably the naturalist presupposition which identifies the immediately given with the object of sense consciousness. He spoke in particular about the ontological status of the "being-of-the-phenomenon" and the constituting subject. In his view, the affirmation that philosophy is necessarily confined to the phenomenon is an affirmation which, by that very fact, transcends the phenomenon. It cannot be itself a phenomenon and, consequently, must be consigned to being a speculative affirmation about being.

One might well disagree with Fink on the metaphysical principles which he sees at the basis of phenomenology. It seems difficult to deny, however, that the choice and elaboration of the method are rooted in views that are at least implicit, on the being-of-the-object and the being-of-the-subject, and ultimately on being in general, regardless of what these views might be.

What is true for Husserl in particular is equally true for phenomenology as a whole. It seems indeed that there is a common implicit ontology which, far from being established by the method, founds it and gives it its meaning. The attempt to do for phenomenology what it claims itself to do for the other sciences, however, is not the immediate subject of this study. These preliminary remarks, to which we will return, provide us simply with a starting-point.

Actually it appears that the presuppositions of the phenomenological method are not exclusively of the metaphysical order. The method rests squarely on an anthropology and an epistemology. *Phenomenology as a method is the re-*

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sult of a certain conception of man and his knowing capacities. Our point is that in every phenomenological approach there is a set of ideas about the rationality and irrationality of human consciousness, about habit, memory and imagination, which are not the fruit or results of the analyses but the conditions of their legitimacy. If these ideas sometimes appear at the conclusion of the descriptions, it is mainly because every analysis unfolds within those positions which it has already chosen unconsciously.

An index of the accuracy of this statement is the fact that this same image of man which forms the unity and implicit content of all current phenomenology appears in almost identical form in various other domains of civilization in the same epoch in which the phenomenological method has arisen and become prevalent. This fact indicates that, like other manifestations of culture, phenomenology is historically determined by the *Weltanschauung* of its epoch—which would appear to contradict all its claims of being radical. And yet, this seems to be the case. In characteristically parallel fashion, the same anthropology inspires all the categories of human behavior. We are tempted to speak of the image which the twentieth century has made of man. But instead, in each domain of cultural activity we shall choose only a characteristic tendency. Of necessity our study is limited to certain traits of the "image of man."

In examining each trait, we shall see its repercussions and resonance in the *theoretical*, the *practical* and the *poetic* domains in turn. As the characteristic theoretical attitude of our time, we choose the phenomenological current (as already indicated by our starting-point). In the area of praxis we shall undertake to comprehend the increasing prestige of psychoanalysis and its generalizations. In the poetic domain, we shall consider

artistic "poesis" as it appears in the new forms that have arisen, or have become widespread and accepted in this century. If this choice of characteristic currents and anthropological traits seems arbitrary at first, we hope that our exposition will show them well-founded. In any case, there is nothing more helpful in understanding any object of reflection in its own right than to see the connections which link it to the totality of the world in which it appears. The recognition of correspondences and analogies is a step that is always fruitful in the order of the unveiling of being. Often it is this which allows us to penetrate closer to the essence of what we are investigating.

REASON

OUR CENTURY seems to be dehumanized by a devaluation of reason and the rational. The philosophy in vogue has turned away from rationalism. The "rationalization" of behavior is considered a kind of bad faith by depth psychology. Since the end of the nineteenth century, irrational, obscure and instinctive forms of art have come to the foreground. Is there a more obvious cultural phenomenon than this discrediting of reason? And yet, such a diagnosis seems inaccurate and superficial. We are confronted here rather with a displacement of what is taken to be reason. More precisely, today we no longer look for the true and essential "reason" where traditional philosophy looked for it.

From the beginning of his philosophical career, a beginning which coincided in time with the birth of our century, Edmund Husserl was troubled by the logicistic character of a philosophy detached from experience. He did not believe that truth is situated in a self-sufficient sphere beyond the world and history, a sphere to which thought has im-

mediate access. Thereafter he no longer wanted to search for the real explanatory and clarifying reasons in logical principles and *a priori* deductions. It was an error, he saw, to attribute the highest intelligibility to this one aspect of formal organization. This evolution did not take place in Husserl's thought alone. The value of the *a priori* has been universally questioned. It has become a synonym for prejudice and, consequently, of deception and obfuscation. Instead of being the royal road to truth, the constructions of pure, reflective thought are regarded as alibis, as a veil which prevents us from seeing what truly exists. Traditional reason as commonly understood, regarded as evident and clear to itself, in a spirit which possesses itself in perfect transparency, is precisely that which is most tempting, and therefore most dangerous and misleading for the spirit. The "reason" of pure thought is not truly a "reason for being" or a true reason.

Today, on the contrary, "reason" is sought for in what was formerly considered the irrational. For the irrational has also changed its meaning. It is no longer regarded as pure opaqueness. The irrational of the twentieth century is not the anti-rational of romanticism. The prelogical or antepredicative of immediate experience is not synonymous with blind emotion or a nebulous sentimentality which pleads "nature" and "night" in order to remain in its dense, self-enclosed ignorance. The *Lebenswelt*, the world that is experienced before all reflection, is not the enemy of reflection; on the contrary, it is its source, origin and foundation. All thought is conditioned by this lived world which includes the whole of man, his affectivity and his impressions, as well as his nascent thoughts. In this sense we could enunciate the paradox: the irrational is the domain of true reason. This is close

to what Heidegger says: "Perhaps, however, what we take as feeling or disposition is more rational, that is, more intelligible, because it is more open to being, than any intellectual reason, which, to the extent that it became reason (ratio) was misinterpreted as rational."³ Note the expression "more rational than any reason" ("*vernunftiger als alle Vernunft*") which describes how much knowledge the irrational actually contains. The twentieth century has become irrationalistic to save reason.

If, in the face of what is commonly accepted and seems to be the experience of "common sense," phenomenology has shifted the true reasons of thought to another domain, one could also say that its base, psychoanalysis, has done something analogous for the true reasons of acting. What Freudianism calls a clear consciousness is basically nothing but the constructive and fictive consciousness detached from its true roots and, consequently, covering up and dissimulating the reason behind action. Thus it denounces an unreal reflection of the interior mind which believes that it is perfectly clear to itself and free of all conditioning. The truth should be sought rather in the direction of unconscious conditioning. It has already been remarked that this Freudian consciousness is in no way a stranger to true consciousness. On the contrary it is terribly conscious; it contains in its depths the germs of all knowing; it is truly knowledge because it is knowledge of the truth. Psychoanalysis directs its efforts to the unconscious to save the conscious.

An analogous displacement of values inspires the tendencies of that art which can be called contemporary. An identical anthropology forms the basis of "poetic" manifestations. The ideas explained here have resulted in the birth of a new and original art. For the twentieth century the essence of poetry or of

art in general, that is, what makes art truly art, does not lie in the *a priori* constructions of canonized laws and forms. Such canonized forms rest on evidences acquired by academicism. Academicism agrees with and caters to the mind imprisoned in the day-to-day world; by nature it is rationalistic and self-sufficient. The refusal to see the laws of art and its *raison d'être* in rigid academicism and its recipes was already proclaimed in the nineteenth century in the form of phenomena such as "free verse" and the "*salon des indépendants*." (The precise chronology here is of little importance basically; a century is born slowly.) B. de Schloezer has established an analogous change of direction in the musical field. He writes: "Today we are witnessing a phenomenon in the field of music comparable in all points to one which was recognized long before the last war in the domain of plastic arts and of literature. After the example of painters, indeed of sculptors and poets as well, young composers in their turn are taking the risk of questioning the language that has been inculcated in them. They are not just replacing this or that means of expression or this or that norm (as innovators do generally) but the very principles which form their base, which coordinate and justify them. And it must be agreed that some at least of these composers are luminous and courageous spirits—not at all extravagant or presumptuous—who are capable of a radical questioning and, more importantly, of accepting all its consequences."⁴

In all areas, therefore, there is a discrediting of that dogmatic rationalism which accords to thought and its laws a special and superior existence at the heart of being. In all domains there is a questioning of accepted and so-called evident principles, and of canonized norms.

This return to the rational, to the experienced, to conditioned and committed thought, is not, as we have already insisted, a return to chaos, but rather an effort to return to a true reason; the illusions of habit had canonized a reason emptied of content. We have to do here with an irrational which, just as much as dogmatic academicism, has a necessity and a law. But here the necessity and the norms pertain to the whole of being, and not solely to one abstract, separate and closed domain.

REDUCTION AND HABIT

THE GRASP OF THE ESSENCE, of the necessary or the absolute on the level of lived experience, however, is neither easy nor immediate. It is not given in a clear and total intuition. The human intellect does not occupy a divine point of view where it would be co-present to each moment of the time in which the experience is situated. Our intelligence itself is engaged in this time and conditioned by it. In contrast to the norms preached by dogmatism, the norms of experience are not evident in themselves. An essence is revealed only in multiple manifestations, in a series of *Abschattungen* (perspectives) and it is only in a dialogue with these manifestations that the intellect will succeed in attaining it. Every true reason is latent and hidden and we must therefore have a "method," a map or "technique," in order to make it appear. In order that reason might appear at the heart of the irrational, experience must be submitted to a detailed analysis. Indeed, for a spirit engaged in time, carried along and conditioned by it, there are two ways of living time. Either it can abandon itself to the temporal flux, letting itself live in a passive manner; or else the spirit will make the necessary effort to recapture this time so as to dominate it

and unfold it. This undertaking, which is essentially and specifically human, is situated in time. It does not lead us into the a-temporal and pre-personal sphere of pure thought. It is never disengaged from time and its conditioning. Radical reflection does not suppress the conditioning revealed by scientific research (it could not do so in any case with impunity); but its purpose is to "transform passive conditioning into conscious conditioning."⁵ There we have the only possibility of freedom, the way to it, and, at the same time, its very mode of being.

The preliminary condition of this coming to awareness is the suspension of all the reifying theses and all the objectifications which no longer contain an evident connection with their real origin and point of departure—all the affirmations and positions which blindly endure the conditioning of *fact*, which lazily claim the mantle of tradition. It is necessary to break deliberately with this tendency of the everyday and ordinary spirit before it can be shown how, by its prejudices and acquired positions, it has become separated from its foundation in reality and truth. We must break with the habitual and ordinary consciousness which cannot, as such, succeed in grasping itself. That is the first phase of these techniques. All these methods will be first of all "reductive." But this suspension of the objectifying and reifying theses is not done so that the mind might turn away from what is true and objective. It is done so that there might finally remain only that which is truly based on the real, so that we might be put back face-to-face with the immediate experience of the real such as it appears in a primary and original contact.

Our description of this reductive technique might appear to be borrowed exclusively from the procedure of phenomenology since we have so far applied it

to the theoretical attitude only. Let us see it also in psychoanalysis and the work of serious modern artists.

Psychoanalysis must first of all detach consciousness from its natural attitude. The technique of hypnosis first had this role of reduction. When Freud recognized that hypnosis involved new and perhaps worse concealment, however, it had to be replaced by the method of total relaxation in which the patient has to put aside the stiffness of the natural attitude. This suspension of the natural and habitual attitudes is for the sake of reevaluating them from the point of view of their real origins. Psychoanalysis, just like phenomenological analysis, is the antithesis of introspection. Introspection remains enclosed in the natural attitude; it abandons itself to an interior which grasps the interior movements of everyday events. By contrast, psychoanalysis, together with phenomenology, rejects the "thing-consciousness" or quasi-objective consciousness, and accepts rather the significative consciousness, a consciousness whose meaning appears only after the break and the leap of the reduction. The reductive technique is difficult and demands an effort of renunciation. It requires a sacrifice which at first sight seems to be a sacrifice of self, but which is basically only a sacrifice of an empirical and constructed I, comfortably habitual yet vacant, devoid of meaning and false.

Art likewise snatches the real away from the milieu which absorbs it, which veils and hides it. It seeks to break with the ordinary, with what is habitual and conventional, because this rupture is the preliminary condition of a conversion to true and immediate reality. Art does not break with the world and is not revolutionary because it wants to hide in the unreal. If it refuses to "accept" it, it is in order to render possible the "discovery" of an authentic world.

At this point we might describe the history of reductive techniques from Cezanne and van Gogh to Salvador Dali, Picasso and the abstractionists. We might cite the way in which contemporary poetry, rediscovering the sources of poetry, uproots the word from its everyday-utilitarian and habitual-use, in order to reveal it as it is in itself. In non-poetical usage, the word is emptied and lost, it disappears and dies in pure function. Music also, today, is primarily a reduction. To reduce (lead back) sonority, timbre and tones to the musical world, it is first necessary to uproot them from the normal and habitual, or even from what is extraordinary when, by force of repetition, it has been transformed into the ordinary and the usual. Accordingly, just like painting, music is rediscovering certain techniques of primitive peoples in their surprising and original discovery of the world of consciousness and meaning which is irreducible to an object enclosed in a network of causes. These types of music seek to go beyond the natural timbre and normal register. Thus it achieves a kind of exile or uprooting from the world of things and utensils, the country of the selfish and calculating mind to which we abandon ourselves. These types of music create and evoke the "beyond" and the "quite different," and, in revealing them, show how that hidden order is the basis of, and contains the explanation and ultimate reason of what is "here" in its factual presence and familiar to us. In contemporary music there is even a reduction of the second degree. Our musical instruments which, because of their very creation, are already means of disguising natural sonority, are transposed in turn into eccentric and surprising registers. Obviously the eccentric in great art is not an end in itself but a means, a preparation, a recovery or an awakening prior to any artistic revela-

tion. Eccentricity in art is a way of suspending all the reifying and objectifying theses which are not justified. It stems from an attitude toward habit and the habitual identical with the phenomenological and psychoanalytical attitude.

IMMEDIATE EXPERIENCE AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS

BUT TO WHAT THEN, does reduction reduce? It reduces (leads back) to the sphere of conditioning conditions which we have lost sight of, habituated as we are to being conditioned, and which, therefore, have been progressively clouded over. It is the sphere of that immediate, primary experience which is original and originating. One can also call it primitive, unconscious or naive. It means to live and see the reality of the world and ourselves with completely new eyes, as if we were seeing it for the first time. It is to put aside every optical illusion, every selfish and abstracting way of sifting and filtering that illusion on the part of the blasé adult, which consists in believing that one should be astonished at nothing, in believing that "all that is quite natural," that all has been foreseen or is at least foreseeable and calculable. If he abandons his stupid, adult pride, man will be able to recover the gift of childhood. In surprise and astonishment he will discover explanations. He finds the key to truth in the disquieting experience of primordial discovery. The first characteristic of immediate experience, therefore, is naiveté.

This term, which the founder of phenomenology uses so frequently, was never understood by him in a pejorative sense. The "naive" is the authentic and the spontaneous. It is that which characterizes concrete and true experience. This experience is "naive" because it is not objectivating, indifferent or detached. The doctor who has lost his "nai-

veté" before death will have lost by the same token the meaning of death. To the extent that he is not shocked anew and troubled by death, he can no longer grasp this mystery. If he has made of death an "object" that is domesticated and explained by its causes, it is no longer troubling for him. This attitude in which he artificially closes his eyes before the anguish of death will never be able to lead him to its essential meaning; this can be accomplished, on the contrary, only through the shock and scandal of the naive and strange experience in which the "strange" is precisely what is strangely intimate and familiar. The appeal which it makes to immediate experience affiliates phenomenology with existentialism. We recognize here the anguish of Kierkegaard and the "leap" of Jaspers.

The appreciation and reevaluation of what is experienced in the mentality of childhood is one of the characteristics of our century. The positivist century always used this word in a pejorative sense. It would never have dreamed of searching in this direction for the path to truth. Psychoanalysis includes similar affirmations in its *explicit* system. But the importance which dogmatic psychoanalysis accords to the first unconscious and infantile emotions maintains its full resonance only when one connects these affirmations with implicit views and fundamental intuitions which have inspired and oriented the method of analysis. The aversion for the constructed and the rationalized already implied an appreciation for the spontaneous and naive, for what is not forced or conventional, for that which is liberated from all the restraints of education, social traditions and hypocritical respectability. The very choice of the domain of the unconscious as the terrain of exploration and as the true foundation for acting, of that unconscious which is knowledge without a

mask and will without constraint, had to orient psychoanalysis in the direction of the infantile soul and its new and fundamental experience.

For artists likewise, this "gift of childhood" is not a pure literary artifice, or an image stripped of meaning. We have noted already that contemporary artistic writers appeal to the writings of primitives because of their power of reduction. It is quite evident also that child-like writings are rediscovered, not as an indication of weakness, but as a technical artifice. It is a means of evoking immediate experience in its character of "naïveté." The customs-house officer of Rousseau; the expressionists; the use of words for their magical power in poetry, "Am, stram, gram . . .". But we find not only writing and other artifices of form. In addition, this form can never be isolated from the meaning of art. Art opens itself only to eyes that are humble, astonished and naive. It demands a soul that is pure and new, a virginity before the real that is perpetually regained. The immediate experience called for by every reductive technique is a "naïve" experience.

Immediate experience is, furthermore, a "significant" experience; it has an immanent meaning which, at the same time, transcends this experience in linking it to the past and the future.

Every content of experience has its own proper laws, its logic and its necessity. As against idealism, phenomenology affirms that the phenomenon considered in itself has a meaning—that it is not necessary to have recourse to a noumenon that is anterior and exterior to the phenomenon, and autonomous, in order to interpret and order it. The word "phenomenology" already had this meaning for Hegel. It implies the affirmation of a *logos* or of a logic of the phenomenon, of a law at the interior of the very content of experience, a content which is

organized and developed according to immanent laws. These laws render the phenomenon thinkable and intelligible. Every fact, therefore, no matter what it is, has its hidden explanation, its meaning and its reason. The fact is stripped of reason and foundation only for a superficial mind, for a mind which pretends to pure thought and clear consciousness.

Psychoanalysis implies the same conception of lived experience. Behavior that is apparently devoid of meaning cannot be explained by physical or nervous causes alone. All behavior has a human meaning; it contains an intelligible sense. It is those very facts to which clear consciousness is most indifferent that are the most revealing. The objectivating and abstracting consciousness will have done less to seal off and deform these facts to make them fit its pre-established frames. The most insignificant facts, therefore, will become the most significant for psychoanalysis because in these the so-called unconscious gives itself in the purest and most direct fashion. Hence the importance of the *Fehlleistungen*, the insignificant forgettings, the errors of hearing and speaking. These are the most characteristic symptoms of the true laws which order, coordinate, unify and explain behavior. Fundamentally, Freud himself also envisaged the construction of an *a posteriori* logic, of a logic of the illogical, of a reason for the irrational or laws of the unconscious.

Contemporary art proclaims that, even though it is liberated from all academicism, the spontaneous and the immediate have their own proper laws, laws and conditions as unyielding as *a priori* laws. While it refuses to submit itself to pre-constructed laws, art nevertheless admits the law of its own proper object, the internal law of lived experience. To admit and discover this law is truly the

path of liberty. Failing to discover it, one will have the illusion of a non-conditioned clear consciousness. The artistic consciousness is liberated only by the cathartic effect of bringing into awareness all the profound and enigmatic laws of its object. No great novelist will be declared a master who is absolute, who is free with an arbitrary liberty from his story and characters. The times when novelists cut the figure of omniscient and all-powerful gods in their work have changed. Contemporary novelists have realised that a novel of this type would be false, inhuman and hypocritical. The novelist must be humble and receptive, just as any other artist. Everything the artist creates is ordained by the living laws of its destiny as inscribed in the original experiences.

In all domains, then, we find the *eidōs* of lived experience. And this idea, this immanent meaning, is always a dialectical idea. It is a solitary meaning of a "history," a meaning which transcends the fact in linking it to the past and the future. The allusion to the phenomenology of Hegel puts us already on the way to discovering the historical character of meaning. We said above that the spirit that reflects, as well as the lived experience which is the domain or reflection, is engaged in time. But similarly, the meaning and the reason which the mind extricates from this experience are not projected into an atemporal order. Reason, in its turn, is a becoming and a genesis. The universal meaning of the contingent experience is constituted by the links which tie this present experience to all past or future experiences. The essence of my experience of friendship, for example, is constituted by all the friendships I have experienced in the course of my personal existence. In addition, there is not only my personal experience. There is the experience of all those who have participated

in or are participating in the constitution of the world to which I belong. Thus in all our notions there is a "sedimented history" which constitutes their meaning or direction. We say "direction" for, indeed, this intelligible becoming of ideas is directed toward the future and determines it already. All meaning inscribes a fate or a destiny. Dialectical reason is simultaneously intentional and teleological. The grasp of the meaning of the lived experience (that is, the eidetic intuition at the heart of the *Erlebnis*) is the intuition of intentional and dialectical objects. The quality of consciousness that permits the grasp of the *eidos*, therefore is *intentionality*. In becoming aware of the historical meaning of his experience, the situated subject goes beyond his situation, he surpasses even himself as an isolated subject, because he knows and understands that history is realized only in intersubjectivity. Every eidetic intuition is realized in the form of a dialectic: it reconstructs the "*Sinngeneses*" (the genesis of meaning). This genesis is an historical tale of the becoming of the subject in its relation to the constituted world in intersubjectivity. Consequently it is always an analysis of "being in the world" or of *Dasein*. The hidden meaning of the Husserlian phenomenology (especially of the later Husserl, when he was most conscious of himself) links Husserl, therefore, both to his predecessor Hegel, and to his successors, the existentialists.

Current psychoanalysis has an analogous conception of meaning. Meaning is not a given or a thing. The meaning of physical facts and behavior in general is constituted by the concrete history of the tendency involved. If we fail to understand the past, we cannot interpret the present. Similarly, analysis attempts to revive the memory of this past in order to lead this conditioning into present experience and dominate it

instead of submitting to it. How could one understand the paralysis of the patient of Breuer if he did not know the stories of her past and the emotions she had previously experienced with her father and her fiancée? Psychoanalysis, also, has extended this meaning beyond the limits of personal history. Already with Freud, the Oedipus complex was found to be related to the whole history of western civilization. That is the reason for the great interest he took in the history of civilization throughout his scientific career. Here likewise, historical meaning is intentional and dynamic; it prefigures the future and predestines us.

Every experience lived on the level of the unconscious forms or reforms the complex which is fundamentally the meaning and the constant and universal significance of this experience. The complex is the sedimented history, but it is also the source and reason of all further action; it is a dynamism with indefinite repercussions.

But does art equally affirm the historical character of the immediate experience which it undertakes to reveal? Is it not rather a transverse cut in time—a suppression of time in a fixed and immutable representation? Is not this experience forever petrified in the single moment of its creation? Such reflections are suggested to us by the work of art reduced to an object. All this is true for a work that is dead. The living art of today wishes to declare even in its technique that its experience is not a closed, isolated and individual experience. It wants to base itself on an intersubjective structure and one that is open to all. Art would be accessible to visions of the past and presentiments of the future. The moment it evokes is always a moment charged with history and heavy with promises. The instantaneous is found only in photography. It does

not exist in art. Even the artistic instantaneous is no longer enclosed in the instant. The "instant" of immediate experience refers to the multiplicity of real or possible perceptions of the same object. The meaning of cubism, indeed, seems to be the intentional grasp of a meaning which, by incarnating itself in form, refers to the dialectical unfolding of the "*Abschattungen*." Despite a rationalistic dogmatic, cubism does not seem to us purely "ideographic," but rather, as descriptive and dialectical. In a perceptive instant it makes explicit everything that this perception contains of an historical becoming of the immediate meaning. The cubist does not give us pure thought; he tells us the history of his immediate experience.

It is particularly in the art of languages that this presupposition of the dialectical structure of all essential meaning is validated. The whole art of prose tends to join the novel or the "drama," (in the etymological sense of *drao*). In admitting that the definition of the art of prose as a phenomenon of civilization is itself also dialectical, we can see in this tendency or intention a revelation of the essence of prosaic language as such. All prose forms might well have disavowed the form of the novel as an ideal. Now, as we saw above, the novel is defined by the systematic refusal of the point of view of the witness or the non-engaged spectator. All explanation must arise from the "drama" itself, from the becoming which is unfolded. An *eidos* which would have no need for the dialectic of events in order to appear would be a stranger to the novel, would come from outside and, consequently, would have to be rejected as clumsy and superfluous. Thus the technique of artistic analysis itself seeks to be a reflection of the dialectical essence of art and of the truth on which it is based. We have here also an acceptable and even

illuminating meaning of an "engaged" art. All great art is engaged and at the same time "engaging." In opening a world it creates, it determines a destiny; it traces a future. Since Picasso, woman is destined to be seen in another way; and Henry James changes the destiny of our relations with our associates. Engaged and engaging art is far removed from the "splendid isolation" of romanticism.

MEMORY

WE SEE THAT these different analyses—phenomenological, psychoanalytical, and artistic—presuppose and imply the dialectical structure of the meaning involved in naive experience. By this very fact they are based on a definite conception of memory. According to this new conception, memory is no longer the "reservoir" of *images of the past* as it was for those of reist mentality of the preceding century. Memory is above all an attitude, almost a *definition*, of the engaged consciousness. It is a necessary and essential aspect of intentionality. Indeed, intentionality is the definition of consciousness as the grasp of meaning or significance: a grasp of meanings which are universally valid throughout contingent experience. "Intentionality" marks the fixed point toward which consciousness is directed. All consciousness converges on this point which is maintained throughout the totality of lived experiences. Intentionality is the intuition which grasps or "intentions" the *eidos* of a hate throughout the course of the drama of a lived hate, and throughout all the possible hates which have crossed our existence or have touched and marked it. Consciousness is the consciousness "of" hate throughout all these events. But since, as we have seen, all meaning is historical and dialectical, it is indispensable that consciousness be

consciousness through a memory, that intentionality have the structure of a memory. Memory, therefore, before all else, is the dynamism of the past in the present, and the annexation of this dynamism by present consciousness. Memory is power as much as it is knowledge. It is the power we have to appeal to the past in order to prepare for the future. For, as a matter of fact, all recall and memory have a *purpose*. Memory is teleological, it is directed towards the future as much as to the past. We remember or forget—for forgetting is also an attitude of memory—"in order to." Sometimes, indeed, it is better not to remember. This whole description represents memory as an activity and behavior and in no way as a sack filled with representations.

It is to memory in this sense that reflection, psychotherapy and the poetic fiction of art make their appeal. In each case memory has a role to play, a function to fulfill, an "action" to perform. One wishes, indeed, that memory, thanks to its knowledge—that is, memory becoming conscious or vice versa—might be changed into a power over the past, the present and the future—that it be truly experience and true "experience." There is nothing like experiences to engender an action that is free and self-conscious. This liberation or "discharge" on the past is the *catharsis*. We have already spoken of it in regard to phenomenology. The role of catharsis in psychoanalysis is especially well known. But does contemporary art also appeal to the catharsis of memory?

More than any other type, an art which is "drama" or story needs experience, a coming to awareness of the past, in order not to be overwhelmed by this past, in order not to be its blind plaything. Only then can artistic creation as creation have a place, that is, in so far as it is free. The artist must be lib-

erated from all compromise. He must be purified of all complicity. Furthermore, it is due to his art that he will no longer be compliant. His work proclaims that he has not abdicated. The artist is free to adhere to the meaning of this experience or refuse it. In rendering a content of experiences manifest he becomes its master, he becomes the arbiter of his destiny. It is in this way that the artist is a creator. He has broken the spell of the causalities of the past and opened the way to freedom. He is purified and ready always for a re-awakening—a being completely new in a new world.

IMAGINATION

SO FAR WE HAVE SPOKEN of the structure and the characteristics of the essential meaning which is discovered on the level of naive and immediate experience, the level of the phenomenon. We have noted the anthropological positions which these conceptions imply. With respect to the technique of analysis itself, however, we have spoken up till now only of the preparatory technique which consists in the negative phase of the phenomenological "reduction," of total relaxation and the systematic break with the habitual and the commonplace. We have not yet considered the actual practice of the technique which attempts to make the essential meaning, whose nature we already recognize, appear in an explicit fashion. After undertaking the break, we must undertake the analysis and research. In order to follow adequately the process of unconscious constitution or conditioning (two notions which should be compared more fully with each other), in order to retrace the hidden history of the intelligible becoming of notions, and in order to reestablish the itinerary of the intentional genesis from the immediate and naive contact, we must have a cer-

tain technique of description. We must have certain devices to rediscover the threads of the story of this genesis. We must have a creative technique so that the drama might consent to begin. Every catharsis, to be sure, is self-effectuating, but it needs the invitation of the memory. It must be solicited in a certain way. After the reduction, one can really undertake the work of the "*Wesenschau*" or general intentional analysis. How can we invite the memory to reconstruct the true constitution of the phenomenon?

Fundamentally, one tells it a "history" and solicits it to see if it consents. All the analyses in question proceed by certain keys, certain hypotheses, experiments or fictions. It is only these multiple fictions which succeed in putting the mind on the path to truth. In all these analyses, the *imaginative* function, or rather the *imaginative* attitude, has to play the role of mediator. It is through the channel of the image and the imagination that memory is discovered. The true and fundamental history needs a story or a *mythos* to appear in its truth. The very practice of these methods of analysis presupposes, therefore, certain views on the nature and role of the imaginary. They are based, quite unwittingly, on an epistemology of the imagination.

In order to make the necessary, the identical and the invariable appear at the heart of a phenomenon, we know that phenomenology admits and even demands a free imaginary variation of this phenomenon. With the help of the almost inexhaustible possibilities of its variations, more than by an experience of fact—which runs the risk of remaining impoverished, stereotyped or deformed by habit—the analyst succeeds in discovering the elements which perdure throughout all these variations. In an experience of fact, any stability might be accidental, fortuitous or incidental.

To avoid all misunderstanding, we should note that these free variations do not take place in the order of the pure possible. They are not an *a priori* "game." All reading of essence with the aid of fictive variations is done on the level of the existent. There is no world of "*a priori* concepts." Husserl demands that the imaginary construction be truly incarnate, that there be an immediate evidence, a "*Sichtlichkeit*" of its value of existence. There is no intuition of essence if our attention has no possibility of directing itself toward the corresponding individual; if one cannot form a "consciousness of example" to illustrate it.

Furthermore, we know the importance that psychoanalysis attaches to the fictive and imaginary construction of dreams, of hallucinations and of the fabling faculty of the subject; and, in a whole culture generally, to images, myths and allegorical representations. In the discovery of unconscious emotive events of the past at the basis of the specific dynamism of the complex, the analysis of imaginary fictions plays a major role. Now, it is precisely the concrete complex which we want to know and grasp in order to dominate it. The complex is the core, the stable and essential element in a diverse group of phenomena. As we know, Freud was at first deceived by the discovery of the resemblance, and, consequently, of the factual inaccuracy of most of the so-called "memories of childhood." He had noticed the monotonous sameness of the outline of all these scenes of violence and incest. But on reflection he saw that the *imaginary* character of the stories was a necessary element in the discovery of the essential reality of the Oedipus complex. The fabrication itself was a form and a revelation of the hidden meaning of the experienced emotion; it had a profoundly existential meaning.

Contemporary art, for its part, cultivates the power of the imagination in a special way. In its techniques it systematically uses the possibilities offered by free variations of the spontaneous imagination.

In all its forms, art has always been a making of fables, a "poetic fiction." It is essentially *poiesis* and creation. But not every epoch has realized this aspect in as systematic a fashion as our own. It is since Rimbaud that the systematic technique of hallucination and dream has been applied to poetry. The whole surrealist school makes use of these same means of analysis. The workings of the dream aspect have been the object of special care on the part of the abstractionists. There is not a form of art that escapes it. It is also important to notice in the domain of art that the imaginary is not employed as a means of evasion, as a way of turning aside from the existing real, for closing the eyes and dreaming in order to forget. On the contrary, in all great art, fiction is incarnated in a living and present "form" in which we can remember and perceive the truth. The purpose of imaginary variations is to render visible the essential, the "*Sichtlichkeit*" proper to the "*Wesenschau*." All artistic technique, all writing must be conscious of the "exemplary" or "exemplificative" character of the story it describes and retraces. Thus, we can clearly recognize the existential value of artistic creation, its indispensable role, its vital import and its "truth." The essence or the *eidos* is the internal law of the execution and formation of poetic fiction.

Of the attitudes of analysis dealt with here, the mediation of the imaginary seems to suit artistic creation particularly well. This latter, indeed, is essentially fiction. It is *poiesis* in the strict sense of the word. We have just seen, however, that phenomenology and psycho-

analysis also have a certain share in "poesis." Here, then, we have justification for the scorn of the positivists. But let them not exult too soon. The statement is scornful only on condition that we understand the word "poiesis" in an unacceptable and unrealistic sense. There is necessarily an aspect of "poiesis" or creation in every theoretical attitude and in every practical attitude. Furthermore, we could state the opposite with equal truth. This is a proof that the distinction of these different attitudes is not an ultimate division of human behavior, that it is not a matter here of irreducible spheres. The circumincession of the theoretical, the practical and the poetic shows rather that the three refer back to a single human attitude which forms their base. One can always explain and define them by the attitude of man with respect to himself and his world. It is not, then, astonishing—to repeat once again—that we should find the same anthropological conceptions—at the same time universal and historically determined—at the root of each of them.

The conception of the role of the imaginary in the relations of man to himself and his world which is found in phenomenological, psychoanalytical and artistic "practice" is, therefore, and quite naturally, identical in all three domains. Note that it is the *use* itself that one makes of the imagination in these disciplines that *presupposes* this conception. If, consequently, such a conception is given as a result of the analysis of *Dasein*⁶ it is because it was first introduced surreptitiously as a condition of the value of the analysis. The use we make of imaginary variations in our search for what is true and essential, supposes that first of all we accord an existential value to the image. The work of the imagination, likewise, just like that of the memory, is a definition of the intentionality of consciousness. The

imaginary is directed towards and gravitates around an essence. The imaginary mode is an essential modality of the "consciousness of," or a modality of the "being-in-the-world" of consciousness. If imagination were an arbitrary game and a "central" phenomenon of a pure interiority, we could never expect from it the services we do ask from it. But what attitude of consciousness is in question here? The imagination is destined to serve as a substitute, or "analogon" for lived experience, past or future, and, consequently, "absent"—absent with an absence of fact. But one evokes them and renders them present with an essential presence. The imaginary is not a univocal and definitive content of consciousness, fixed and entirely transparent to itself. It is not a "given," it is an *operation* of consciousness, a living operation, ambiguous like real experience. It intentions the real in its true presence. But presence is never a given; it is "mutual discovery," encounter and dialogue. It is only in so far as it is intentional that the imagination can help us in the discovery of what is true. The practice of analysis also supposes that every imaginative evocation of an idea be incarnated in a story and a history. The poetic fiction, or the story-telling function, must guarantee the quasi-perception, or the quasi-"immediate experience" which is the imaginative consciousness. It belongs to the domain of the "sichtlichkeit," of the ante-predicative reflection, of reflection at its origins and birth. The imaginary is by definition image and form, therefore objectivating projection of the *eidōs*—a creative projection. Thus the image is the awakening and the accession of the spirit or true consciousness. The imaginary is a condition for the existence of spirit. Without it, the spirit could not realize a "catharsis" or liberation at the heart of "memory." Indeed, all imagination includes a negative as-

pect, an aspect of negation and deliverance. Without the negating of experience which is also involved in the imaginary, the mind could not succeed in standing apart and liberating itself from its object.

CONCLUSION

IT WILL HAVE BEEN NOTICED that for each trait outlined we find the same fundamental structure. Each trait, indeed, is only an aspect of one and the same manner of being, which is the manner of being of consciousness as engaged consciousness, of *Dasein* as "being-in-the-world." This concordance, however, is not forced or deliberate. It has not been chosen by philosophers, scientists, or artists. On the contrary, quite often the dogmatics of the theoretical justifications constructed as an afterthought, refuse this concordance categorically. There are ideas here which more than one thinker professes despite himself, despite his own vehement protestations. It seems, therefore, that these attitudes (theoretical, practical and poetic) described here, and the conceptions which they presuppose and imply, all derive from the same anthropology, from the same image of the human condition. This image is an implicit and spontaneous one. It is a matter of a conception which imposes itself in a certain way on a great number of thinkers, because it is an integral and fundamental part of the cultural atmosphere in which they live and breathe. If this anthropology is not the only face of the spirit of the twentieth century—after all, a century has many faces—nevertheless it constitutes an essential and more general aspect than might seem to be the case at first sight.

But there we have the most serious problem. If this implicit anthropology is found at the base of all the domains considered, if it is the very root of

thought, how can these methods claim to justify it? Is it not a question of spontaneous and instinctive ideas which are totally defined by historical circumstances? Are we not reduced, once again, to the irremediable relativism of every human attitude, as positivism has affirmed already? Is there no way of getting out of this impasse: Phenomenology, the science of foundations and presuppositions, has tried *ex professo* to escape it. But it would seem, then, that it has illusions about itself. Phenomenology has only displaced the problem of radicalness, for it will never succeed in justifying its own roots, the very conditions of its own value. The impasse is a circle from which there is no means of escape. Phenomenology wants to justify and render true a certain conception of man and the world. To do this it must be acceptable and valid as a method. Now, the truth and legitimacy of the method depend on the truth of the image of man which it would itself establish. The circle, therefore, is perfectly closed. There is no means of escaping it.

But when, at the very interior of a circle, we perceive why there is no way of escaping it, is there then truly a vicious circle? Has one not already escaped it?

It is art which can suggest, or rather indicate, the solution. The ideas which art presupposes and on which it is based are manifested and made apparent by art itself. An idea which would be manifested without artistic work would not be utilizable in art. In such a case, indeed, artistic creation would no longer have any essential necessity, would no longer be indispensable. Now, it is precisely the quality of "being manifest" which constitutes the truth of an idea. *The justification of the idea consists in this passage from the implicit to the explicit. The idea justifies itself in this becoming.*

By its incarnation in a form, by its "expression," it attains the clarity and evidence of its truth.

Thus art is creative and free. This liberty, however, is never arbitrary. Art can be "true" only in manifesting *that which is*. The truth is always anterior to it. The artist is both servant and arbiter of his truth. Thus consciousness can be both engaged and free at the same time. The consciousness which is conditioned and engaged does not, however, cease to be consciousness. Engagement is not a negation of consciousness, but, on the contrary, a condition of its possibility and a guarantee of its ontological importance.

What we have just said about artistic creation is equally valid for the other human occupations considered. The theoretical descriptions of phenomenology, the practice of the psychoanalytical method, as well as the poetic fiction proper to all forms of art, are so many ways of manifesting *that which is*, and, therefore, of legitimatizing and guaranteeing the truth of ideas. If these manifestations resemble each other—and, as a result, combine so readily today—might it not be because they have succeeded, each in its own way, in manifesting the same essential aspect of truth?

Translated by ROBERT O. SWEENEY

¹ J. Nota, *Phaenomenologie als methode*, in *Tijdschrift voor Philosophie*, III, no. 2, May, 1941.

² *Problèmes actuels de la Phénoménologie*, Desclée de Brouwer, 1951.

³ M. Heidegger, *Der Ursprung der Kunstwerkes*, p. 14 in *Holzwege*, Vittorio Klostermann, Frankfurt am/Main, 1952.

⁴ *Quelques considerations sur le langage musical*, in *Journal de Psychologie normale et pathologique*, 1951 ("Formes de l'art, formes de l'esprit"), p. 225.

⁵ M. Merleau-Ponty, *La phénoménologie et les sciences de l'homme*, 1st Part: Le problème des sciences de l'homme selon Husserl (pro Mss. C.D.U., Les Cours de Sorbonne, s.d.).

⁶ Cf. J. P. Sartre, *L'imaginaire*, Gallimard, Paris, 1940.

HANNAH ARENDT***The Human Condition***

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Notes on other Publications

CURRENT FICTION

Edmund Fuller, *Man in Modern Fiction* (New York: Random House, 1958), 171 pp., \$3.50.

George P. Elliott, *Parktilden Village* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1958), 200 pp., \$3.50.

Samuel Beckett, *The Unnamable*, translated from the French by the author (New York: Grove Press, 1958), 179 pp., \$1.45.

Roger Vailland, *The Law*, translated from the French by Peter Wiles (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958), 314 pp., \$3.95.

Juan Goytisolo, *The Young Assassins*, translated from the Spanish by John Rust (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1959), 273 pp., \$3.95.

Nadine Gordimer, *A World of Strangers*, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1958), 312 pp., \$3.95.

Alba de Céspedes, *The Secret*, translated from the Italian by Isabel Quigly (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1958), 249 pp., \$3.50.

Alain Robbe-Grillet, *The Voyeur*, translated from the French by Richard Howard (New York: Grove Press, 1958), 219 pp., \$1.75.

Boris Pasternak, *Safe Conduct*, an autobiography and other writings, introduction by Babette Deutsch (New York: New Directions, 1949; 1958), 286 pp., \$1.35.

Boris Pasternak, *Doctor Zhivago*, translated from the Russian by Max Hayward and Manya Harari (New York: Pantheon, 1958), 559 pp., \$5.00.

1.

Man in Modern Fiction can, conceivably, help the English teacher who wants a fund of clever remarks with

which to lessen the appeal of such naturalistic sub-species as Norman Mailer, James Jones, and Jack Kerouac. That end, albeit praiseworthy, does not justify the dishonest means. It is not honest or critical that, in a chapter on "The Female Zombie," Fuller should discuss Philip Wylie for several pages, and then on the grounds of inadequate space or time, swiftly pass by Faulkner's Temple Drake.

The prevalence of intellectual laziness in critical jeremiads over the absence of the Judaeo-Christian vision of man from the modern novel tempts us to dismiss such concerns and return secure to *l'examination de texte*. Nevertheless, a novel's vision of man is relevant. Man is at the heart of the novel, and man's actions are its life: in the vision it communicates of man, this man, these men, consists the novel's truth, a truth inherent in the good as surely as it is absent from the bad novel. This truth is a vision, not a theory; we can praise a novel for its vision, but not for its theory.

2.

A case somewhat in point is *Parktilden Village*, a first novel by George P. Elliott, who has a theory but not a vision. Peter Hazen, the central figure, is a sociologist on the academic and sexual make. He seduces Eleanor, the wife of a faculty colleague, and, concurrently, Eleanor's daughter Jackie. In addition to these activities, Hazen writes a comic strip, the intellectual fruit of his sociological research. Hazen is the complete a-humanist, and the author's theory about him is plain. This is how Eleanor sees him after she has discovered his affair with Jackie:

... he seemed to be wanting some sort of help from her, she did not know what; she saw it in the helpless hang of his hands. . . . But she had neither strength nor time for it; anyway, she did not really care; pity would do as well.

The theory of loneliness and emptiness is visionless. When Elliott tries to evoke the man Hazen he resorts to slogan: "Nobody can forgive but God"; he has Hazen say with sudden aphoristic gift, "and there is no God." We leave *Parktilden Village* with a little more knowledge of the world Hazen inhabits than could be gained from a reading of any issue of the *Journal of Sociology*.

3.

Samuel Beckett's *The Unnamable* stands in contrast. The theory is unwholesome (if it is a theory at all), but the vision has been superbly communicated. Notice how the novel's narrator defines his world:

Ah, yes, all lies. God and man, nature and the light of day, the heart's outpourings and the means of understanding, all invented, basely, by me alone, with the help of no one, since there is no one, to put off the hour when I must speak of me.

The novel is "a feeble murmur seeming to apologize for not being dead," a total image or irresolution. The narrator is deracinated:

I was under the impression I spent my life in spirals round the earth. Wrong, it's on the island I wind my endless ways.

The self is an object:

The head is there, glued to the ear, and in it nothing but rage . . . a transformer in which sound is turned, without the help of reason, to rage and terror. . . .

One may or may not be sexed:

Mahood, this caricature . . . What if we were one and the same after all, as he affirms, and I deny?

Beckett works out these assumptions with a rather obvious symbolism—Mahood/manhood, Marguerite/innocence, Madeleine/sensuality:

Soon Marguerite will come and light me up . . . my protectress. I shall not hear her coming. I shall not hear her steps because of the snow . . . [but] I seem to exist for none but Madeleine . . . as long as I am not distinguished by sense organs other than Madeleine's, it will be impossible for me to believe sufficiently to pursue my act. . . .

The act is the choice of existence:

. . . it's not worth having, that's all I know, it's not mine, it's the only one I ever had, that's a lie, I must have had the other, the one that lasts, but it didn't last . . . it still lasts . . . I'm still in it . . . you must go on, I can't go on, I'll go on.

Beckett's is a *Summa* of lyrical objections, woven in both his novels and plays around the single vision of an existence that can only be endured. Its content—*vanitas vanitatum*—cannot be denied. Yet, and this is Beckett's tragedy, so long as he remains faithful to that vision, there is nothing else he can say. From book to book, he can only become more incoherent. Structure has almost disappeared from his work; with that gone, he can do away with style: babbling would be his last resort. It would be presumptuous to demand that he make an epistemological leap, but in view of Beckett's talent, one can hope. Meanwhile any one of his works makes us witness to a retching despair next to which Sartre's *Nausea* seems like the mere projectile vomit of an infant.

4.

Roger Vailland's *The Law* falls pleasantly into a conventional slot after a reading of *The Unnamable*. If Beckett is sapiential, Vailland's world seems to

be that of a 20th-century Paralipomenon. For the scene is southern Italy, whose people have been left out, and the theme is power in its archetypal form.

The central symbol is the card game *la legge* in which the winner gains the right to humiliate in personal terms the other participants. The losers gain honor by submitting without show of bitterness to reflections on, say, the sexual appetites of their grandparents. Vailland traces the analogies to *la legge* in all their ironic twists:

... the relationship between prostitutes and their clients was, in fact, complex; by paying the girl, you imposed the law on her; by demanding to be paid, she imposed the law; she was thus able to provide the double pleasure of imposing and submitting to the law at the same moment; this was the height of liberty in love.

But the ultimate irony is seen in Don Cesare, the district nobleman born to power. For he has "lost interest," has lived for years in boredom despite the distractions of money, mistresses, and historical research. No one escapes the law; the victors lose.

Despite the slickness, despite the author's frequent insensitivity, the vision is real. Since Vailland is a Communist, his concern with power could be predicted, but his understanding of its corruptive force is surprising.

5.

The Spanish censors permitted publication of a "slightly cut" version of *The Young Assassins* by Juan Goytisolo. These may well have made the book more modest, but hardly less subversive. Goytisolo's story—an admirable technical achievement when you recall that it was published when he was twenty-one—revolves around a group of youths who, for their individual reasons, have resolved to assassinate a quite innocent

government functionary. The nihilism is young but complete; their society makes even the nihilists stupid. Not only do they choose the wrong man to assassinate; they fail in their attempt. After exposing the whole of the society—both would-be revolutionaries and complacent parents—Goytisolo, who uses his mind, has moved to Paris.

6.

Of the South African novelists who a few years ago threatened to take over the American publishing industry, Nadine Gordimer, the least ambitious, wears the best. Peter Abrahams cannot get a story off the ground. Alan Paton's *Cry the Beloved Country* was, apparently, the lyric cry of a good man who had read closely *A Passage to India*. Miss Gordimer is, in contrast, a professional. She will never say all she has to say in one novel but will say something, economically, usefully, in each. In *A World of Strangers* she isolates a minor tragedy incident to *apartheid*: private life must be sacrificed to public event.

The narrator is a young Englishman, Toby Hood, who looks on his job in South Africa as a chance to escape from his ritualistically liberal parents. Toby, detesting the liberal's desire to be "a voyeur of the world's ills and social perversions," longs for a life of Edwardian grace. But the wish for privacy has public implications:

... hostility, irritation and resentment ... made me want to shout, ridiculously: I want to live! I want to see people who interest me and amuse me, black, white or any color ... let the abstractions go hang. I want to live!

Toby forms a friendship with Steven Sitole, a Negro who is as indifferent to progress for his race as Toby is to supremacy for his. The two men are simplistic, of course; the public intrudes.

And when it does, "all the unguessed at things that underlie one's predictable reactions leap up and take over." The "unguessed at things" are not principle so much as the private man's stubborn rebellion against interference. Toby's rebellion moves him, willy-nilly, into the frontier between the white and black worlds, "that hard and lonely place as yet sparsely populated." He feels himself suddenly "within the world of dispossession, where the prison record is a mark of honor, exile is home..." Like Jonas, Toby must be forced to prophesy, a bitter comment on the Niniveh Miss Gordimer knows so well.

7.

Desired martyrdom is Alba de Céspedes' theme in *The Secret*. Her secret diary is Valeria Cossati's attempt to revolt against what she has become:

[I] wonder whether I didn't start changing character from the day Michele began calling me "Mamma," as a joke. At first I'd liked it—it made me feel as if I were the only grownup in the house. . . . I liked it too because it seemed to justify the tenderness I've always felt for Michele. . . . When he calls me "Mamma" I look at him half gently, half severely, just as I used to look at Riccardo when he was a baby.

With uncommon self-discipline, the author has her heroine record her restiveness and win our love, though we can see at every point that there is no escape for Valeria: she is "Mamma" only because she now depends completely on the role. In the end, the diary must be burned:

This will be the last page. I won't write on the pages beyond it and my future will be, like them, white, smooth, and cold. Smooth as the great white stone on which in the end I'll go back to being called Valeria. "She was a saint," Riccardo will say sobbing...

Signora de Céspedes has grasped and given the truth. One can imagine making *The Secret* required reading for every mother on the second birthday of her first child.

8.

Alain Robbe-Grillet is a novelist whose theories have attracted more attention than his fiction. "The world is neither meaningful nor absurd. It is," he has said. In the novel of the future "deeds and objects will be 'there' before they are 'some thing'..." The wine is heady, and the international fallacy takes on a seductive air.

Here is what the central figure of *The Voyeur*—Mathias—sees as a ship brings him toward the island on which he was born:

The stone rim—an oblique, sharp edge formed by two intersecting perpendicular planes; the vertical embankment perpendicular to the quay and the ramp leading to the top of the pier—was continued along its upper side at the top of the pier by a horizontal line extending straight toward the quay.

It is important that, at that moment, this is what the stone rim is. When the ship draws close, it is something else:

The morning sun, slightly overcast as usual, indicated shadows faintly, yet sufficiently to divide the slope into two symmetrical parts, one darker, one brighter, slanting a sharp point of light toward the bottom where the water rose along the slope, lapping between the strands of seaweed.

The description (matched recently only in William Golding's *The Two Deaths of Christopher Martin*) is objective; but the author's vision is radically subjective.

There is nothing very new in the use of optical shift. In *The Voyeur*, however, a shift in time works an analogous

change in events. Mathias is a watch salesman. He has returned to his native island in the hope of selling watches to former friends. During the day he spends there, a young girl is murdered. He, it would seem, knows nothing of it. Yet, as the book moves on, certain events are repeated. Like the same object seen from a different point of view, the event is simply seen fresh. This is happening . . . then, once more, this is happening. It is the same, yet different. There is no judgment; the event is *there*. We may recognize that a repetition involves self-deception by Mathias, but the repetition is no less there because of it. The reader is made to admit the facts, and that judging any one of them is impossible. But now the novelist's vision moves further.

Robbe-Grillet has made murder the point around which all else revolves: the mystery genre feeds our nostalgia for certitude, and within his vision there would seem to be none. Yet, as we read, objects form their changing clusters and events go through the torsions of repetition, and slowly Mathias is drawn into the center; his guilt is known. There are no judgments; but meaning remains.

9.

The trouble with *Dr. Zhivago* is simple enough: Pasternak is primarily a poet—his lyric gifts are inadequate to sustain five hundred pages of narrative. (The lyric passages of the novel were, incidentally, written first, then strung together with a narrative thread, a fact too apparent to the reader.)

With notable exceptions, *Dr. Zhivago* has been praised for what Pasternak means in our world. This makes for good reading, but the assumption that *Zhivago* means what Pasternak has come to mean is false: what Pasternak has become in history measures his failure in *Zhivago*.

Man's relationship to history is the crux of the problem. Pasternak has a reflex to society that differs substantially from his own actions. That reflex is seen in the author's favorite metaphor for history—the railroad. Take, for example, these lines from "We're Few," a lyric Pasternak wrote in 1921:

We used to be people. We're epochs.
Pell-mell we rush caravan-wise
As the tundra to groans of the tender
And tension of pistons and ties.

This metaphor crops up throughout his lyrics and autobiography. In *Doctor Zhivago*, the revolution "begins" with the railroad strike in 1905; a railroad trip plunges Zhivago's family into the center of the conflict; when his mistress, Lara, flees to safety and unhappiness, Zhivago cannot bear to go to the railroad station to see her off.

The railroad trip is man in society, man lost in the masses, in history with other men. History—as railroad—threatens the person: "people" become "epochs." Surrender to history is surrender of self:

But to look on inactively while the mortal struggle raged all around was impossible. . . . So when the telephonist at his side jerked convulsively and then lay still, he crept over to him, took his cartridge bag and rifle. . . . But as pity prevented him from aiming at the young man whom he admired and with whom he sympathized, and simply to shoot into the air would be too silly, he fired at the blasted tree. . . . But alas!—however carefully he tried to avoid hitting anyone, every now and then a young attacker would move into his firing line at the crucial moment. Two of them he wounded, and one . . . seemed to have lost his life.

Action does not compromise ideals but thwarts them altogether.

Joy and the ideal come where "the rails are ended," where the artist works in solitude, or lovers share one another

apart from society. Zhivago and Lara are "united by what separated them from the rest of the world":

Their love was great. Most people experience love without becoming aware of the extraordinary nature of this emotion. But to them—and this made them exceptional—the moments when passion visited their doomed human existence like a breath of eternity were moments of revelation, of continually new discoveries about themselves and life.

In another passage, the nobility of Christianity is discovered in its "doctrine of individuality and freedom." The speech, though among the most moving in the novel (p. 411-414), posits a conflict between Christianity and "the reign of numbers," with the implication that the highest point of history is reached where organized social history ends and only a history of individuals remains.

The metaphor for such a history—of men thriving side by side—is found in the forest:

He reflected again that he conceived of history, of what is called the course of history . . . by analogy with the vegetable kingdom. In winter, under the snow, the leafless branches of a wood are thin and poor, like the hairs on an old man's wart. But in only a few days in spring the forest is transformed, it reaches the clouds, and you can hide or lose yourself in its leafy maze . . . We cannot lie in wait for it and catch it in the act of change . . . such also is the immobility to our eyes of the eternally growing,

ceaselessly changing history, the life of society moving invisibly in its incessant transformation.

This is not the cruel and mechanical history of the railroad train but it is still a questionable image. Trees make up the forest but are independent of it; there are no essential connections among them. The forest is superimposed on the tree; in this version, history is superimposed on man.

Zhivago is presented as a man "with a talent for life," a Christ figure for our time. If we accept him as such, we can say that Pasternak succeeded in *Dr. Zhivago*. But if, as it seems to me, Zhivago is never in fact present to the history that whirls about him, the chief assertion of the novel is denied by the action; within the suppositions of fiction, assertion—if denied by the action—is untrue.

We are left with Pasternak himself, who seems to be that rare man, the artist more meaningful to us than his works. Here is the man who asserts himself and the spirit under tyranny, who commits himself out of love to the culture that vilifies him, who bears open witness under the threat of death. Were Pasternak a novelist it would be tragic that he failed to create his vision in fiction. But he may now be writing poetry that contains it, for that is his art. If he does write that poetry and we are privileged to see it, let us hope we read it and do not, basely, attempt to use it for a cause.

WILLIAM BIRMINGHAM

THE POLITICAL-CULTURAL SCENE

1.

The Human Condition (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958, vi - 333 pp., \$4.75). Hannah Arendt, the philosopher, writes from the vantage point of "our newest experiences and our most recent fears" in her reconsideration of the human condition. Each of us is or will be involved in trying to cross over from what was the modern age to the world we have come to live in. Because this world is filled with accelerations of all sorts and on all sides and because the dislocations we may undergo can no longer be confined merely to the earth itself, the search we are inclined to make for some solid and secure foothold is scarcely likely to succeed. If we say to ourselves that we shall enter within, seek a refuge in interior life, in some meaningful but private work, or in the rich intimacies, we find that the self has become a problem to itself, work swirls away from us with the speed of sputnik and the stunning efficiency of univac, and nothing mystifies us more than human relations. We must expect in this situation to be visited by a whole parade of those whom Burckhardt called "the terrible simplifiers," those whose slogans promise confident living with business as usual, combined with the seductive suggestion that it is not really necessary to pass over, that between the old and the new it is possible to commute. Dr. Arendt, however, offers us no tranquilized delay, no lead shield against life. Obviously having arrived, she sends back flashes from over there to guide us on our way.

There are many things to ponder throughout the sections of this sensitive articulation of "the web of relationships"—: for example, a meditative probing of the significance of automation,

reflections on the meaning of man's having achieved the Archimedean point ("Whatever we do today in physics . . . , we always handle nature from a point in the universe outside the earth." p. 262), the interweaving throughout of remarkable observations on pain ("Only one who is in pain really senses nothing but himself." p. 310), and the contention that "it was not reason but a man-made instrument, the telescope, which actually changed the physical world view" in the seventeenth century revolution in science and philosophy. But these are incidental to the main theme, which is the active life.

The habit of thinking about the active life, originated by the Greeks and continued by the Christians, in terms of its association in a hierarchy where it is subjected to the *vita contemplativa* and receives whatever meaning it has had solely from the preponderant member in the hierarchy, has left unexplored the distinctions and articulations proper to the active life itself. Marx and Nietzsche "turned the hierarchy on its head," but this did not remedy our want of knowledge of the active life because their reversal operates within the same conceptual framework and leaves it more or less intact.

The Human Condition proposes the articulation of the active life into three fundamental human activities—labor, work and action:

Labor is the activity which corresponds to the biological processes of the human body, whose spontaneous growth, metabolism, and eventual decay are bound to the vital necessities produced and fed into the life process by labor. The human condition of labor is life itself.

Work is the activity which corresponds to the unnaturalness of human existence, which is not imbedded in,

and whose mortality is not compensated by, the species' ever-recurring life cycle. Work provides an "artificial" world of things, distinctly different from all natural surroundings. Within its borders each individual life is housed, while this world itself is meant to outlast and transcend them all. The human condition of work is worldliness.

Action, the only activity that goes on directly between men without the intermediary of things or matter, corresponds to the human condition of plurality, to the fact that men, not Man, live on the earth and inhabit the world. (p. 7)

The body of the book is devoted to explanation of these distinctions and to consideration of their adumbrations in Western history and the just-ended modern age. There is, for example, a brilliant reexamination of the thought of Karl Marx. Carefully separating herself from the "professional anti-Marxists" (This is a time "when so many writers who once made their living by explicit or tacit borrowing from the great wealth of Marxian ideas and insights have decided to become professional anti-Marxists, in the process of which one of them even discovered that Karl Marx himself was unable to make a living, forgetting for the moment the generations of authors whom he has 'supported.'" (p. 79)), Dr. Arendt argues that the conception of labor as "man's metabolism with nature" leads Marx to envision a completely socialized mankind in which work, which adds new objects to the human artifice, would have no place. There would be only labor, which "produces objects only incidentally and is primarily concerned with the means of its own reproduction; since its power is not exhausted when its own reproduction has been secured, it can be used for the reproduction of more than one life process, but it never 'produces' anything but life." (p. 88)

The reconsiderations of *The Human Condition* are pertinent to others than Marxists, however, and some of the reflections prodded by its insistent invitation "to think what we are doing" can be summarized as questions.

Under the heading of labor it might be asked: Are we responding to the human needs of our world when we confine our thinking about action to the development of what are in effect latter day fertility rites? when we think of all aspects of private and public affairs by unreflectively assimilating all of them to the familial concept? when we encourage the feminine half of the human race to passive acceptance of "woman's role" and the suppression in herself of what Veblen called "repugnance to futility"? Are we responding to the needs of the world we live in when we develop "humanisms of labor" in another sense, seeking to obliterate consciousness and desire of higher and more meaningful activities, when what we confront is "the prospect of a society of laborers without labor, that is, without the only activity left to them" (p. 5)?

Because we understand labor so little, the questions regarding other aspects of the active life must perforce be more subtle and less immediate. And it happens that the discussion of work is the least filled-in section of Miss Arendt's book. But questions which would be appropriate here would concern themselves with how seriously we take the world. There is the suggestion that we have not taken it very seriously, that we do not know much about its grain, in the difficulty we experience in conceiving the next and third dimension of the active life which Hannah Arendt distinguishes, namely, action itself. A community asks "Where are our scholars, our artists, and our poets?" and it turns out that it means by this question "Where are 'our' workers, 'our' 'publications'?"

That community must prepare itself to ask the more important question about the authenticity, genuineness, and purity of its action which will permit the freedom out of which these works can be born. Meanwhile we can prepare ourselves for entrance into this realm of freedom by meditating on the plurality which is the condition of that realm—"not only the *conditio sine qua non*, but the *conditio per quam*." (p. 7) We can ask whether or not considerations based on "the nature of man" will by themselves lead us any further in the direction of that "goal."

(G. D.)

2.

More on Joyce. In William T. Noon's *Joyce and Aquinas* (Yale, 1957) and Kevin Sullivan's *Joyce among the Jesuits* (Columbia, 1958) the ever-growing body of Joyce studies is enriched with two informative and perceptive books which go a long way toward restoring both the man and his work to some kind of sane, balanced perspective. They can, incidentally, be read as complementary companion volumes, and while helping to document the way in which the categories of Joyce's mind were essentially Catholic, make even clearer than before that the artist of Joyce's *Portrait* is not to be simply identified with his creator.

Father Noon, in his penetrating and sometimes brilliant study of the major works, shows the saturation of Joyce's intellect by the texts of St. Thomas, a matter of investigation mysterious and alien to most previous commentators. He is not only in full control of the relevant Thomistic materials, but never loses his way in the treacherous area of discerning "influences." His approach is cool and sophisticated; nowhere does he attempt to establish any *quid pro quo* parallel relationship between medieval theologian and modern novelist, but is

content to point out similarities and differences as they occur.

It is difficult to single out any one chapter as especially deserving of attention, since the whole performance maintains a consistently high level of intelligence. His section on "the esthetic question" as it is raised by Stephen Dedalus is valuable both for the light it sheds on the Joycean text and the contribution it makes to the neo-scholastic discussion of the philosophy of beauty:

Stephen confuses, it would seem, the Scholastic analysis of the act of apprehension with this act itself. Adequately to analyze the simplest act of apprehension requires many concepts in any epistemology, but the ordering of the concepts of analysis is not a substitute for the act which is under analysis. The concept of beauty is far from simple. As Aquinas conceives it, it is truly complex, with an ontological-psychological polarity which defies definition. The best one can do is to describe it, and the description must necessarily be complicated. But neither the complexity of this concept nor the complications which arise in a description of its genesis warrant one on Thomist grounds to speak as though it were generated in three stages by the mind. The integrity, consonance (or harmony), and clarity of which Aquinas speaks are all three known simultaneously by the viewer or reader or listener in one intuitive act. (pp. 45-6)

In another section Noon demonstrates by ample quotation from St. Thomas the distinction which the latter made between art and beauty. Poetry, after all, was a part of rhetoric so far as Aquinas was concerned. Noon points out, furthermore, that it is by no means clear that St. Thomas holds beauty to be a transcendental, and therefore to be identified with the true and the good. Aquinas would seem to be more interested in the psychological approach to the question, the subject's apprehension of

a beautiful object, than in the metaphysical status of beauty. The Thomistic discussions of beauty, it might be remarked, will give little comfort to those who wield the vulgar Platonic identification of the good, the true, and the beautiful as a kind of all-explaining slogan, or even as a weapon against works of literature whose ideological slant does not meet with their approval. This sort of philistinism, masquerading as philosophical seriousness, drove Stephen Dedalus to make a specious distinction between static and kinetic art, as it had driven others before him into the sterile dead end of *l'art pour l'art*.

Mention should be made, however slight, of Noon's brilliant commentaries on *Ulysses* and *Finnegan's Wake*. His treatment of the former as "A Comedy of Letters" is especially provocative, examining Joyce's novel from the perspective of comedy. The last chapter in the book provides a linguistic analysis of the *Wake*, and is one of the best statements available on this final expression of Joyce's peculiar genius.

Kevin Sullivan's *Joyce Among the Jesuits* is an informed and informative study of a crucial aspect of Joyce's intellectual and spiritual background. If it did nothing more than correct some of the misconceptions and distortions still current in Joycean criticism, it would be welcome. Those who have been victimized by this murky atmosphere may be surprised to encounter such findings as the following:

... it must come as a surprise to those who believed, like Stanislaus Joyce, that Joyce and the Jesuits afterwards shared only mutual suspicion and distrust, to discover that it was a Jesuit's cordial assistance that enabled Joyce to correct the first draft of an episode in *Ulysses*. The debt Joyce owed to the Jesuits he generously acknowledged, and on their part the Irish Jesuits even today admit that he treated them 'more than fairly' (p. 7).

But Mr. Sullivan's accomplishment is greater than this, and will be invaluable as a source for the forthcoming biography by Richard Ellmann. In his detailed scrutiny of school records, textbooks and pedagogues, Sullivan has brought together, and woven into a meaningful pattern, a body of factual material hitherto inaccessible. Not only has he sifted the significant data connected with Joyce's student days, but he has also provided a highly intelligent commentary on this material. Among other things, *Joyce Among the Jesuits* again throws into relief the crucial distinction between Joyce the man and Stephen Dedalus his fictional surrogate. In Sullivan's words, "... this study should lay the ghost of Stephen Dedalus and preclude any further reading of *Stephen Hero* or the *Portrait* as either actual or 'spiritual' biography."

Sullivan's remarks on the sacerdotalism pervading Joyce's works are of particular interest; he traces its roots back to the spiritual and educational experiences of his early manhood. On the subject of Joyce's vocation, he says:

... Joyce thought longer and more seriously about becoming a Jesuit than is generally supposed or admitted; secondly, that Stephen's spiritual crisis in the *Portrait* is neither a factual nor a psychological re-enactment of a similar crisis in Joyce's own adolescence; and thirdly, that Joyce's refusal of a vocation is quite distinct from his later rejection of Catholicism, though in the *Portrait* Stephen's refusal and rejection are made to appear simultaneous. It would also seem that what has been called Joyce's 'sacerdotalism' had its origin in this same adolescent experience, that the religion of art which he celebrated in his works was a substitute for the art of religion from which he turned away in his youth. (p. 9)

Sullivan's one lapse would seem to be that in his zeal to set the Joyce record

straight, he tackles Noon on the grounds of the source of Thomistic influence to which Joyce was exposed, and ends up largely misrepresenting Noon's position. Otherwise, he has provided a valuable and responsible piece of literary scholarship, adding significantly to our knowledge both of Joyce the man and the dazzling world he created in language.

(J. J. G.)

3.

Political Catholicism in Germany. Joseph Rován's *Le Catholicisme politique en Allemagne* (Editions du Seuil, 1956) traces the long and complex history of the political life of German Catholics since the French Revolution. It should be read alongside of Maurice Vaussard's *Histoire de la Démocratie Chrétienne* (cf. CROSS CURRENTS, Summer 1956, pp. 274-5). It was originally planned as a section of that work, completing the latter's study of developments in France, Belgium, and Italy. Because of the special evolution of German political Catholicism, this enlargement of Rován's research was really inevitable. Rován draws on the classic works of Goyau (*L'Allemagne religieuse*) and Bachem (*Geschichte der Deutschen Zentrums-partei*) for the period up to 1918; for the later decades, he has drawn together the still scattered materials and provides a valuable over-all view.

Rován is objective, and gives a good exposition of the various stages of his long history. Although he has personal criticism for certain aspects of German political Catholicism, he tries to seize the movement from within, and to present it with sympathy. Some of his specific judgments may seem insufficiently

nuanced: for example, he depicts the Center of Bismarck's period as "tempted by the memories of the Middle Ages... and by the attraction of a new Christendom which would put an end to this Liberal parenthesis"; but the Center's leaders were less theoreticians than men of action, who allowed themselves to be guided by the political and social realities of their time. Occasionally a categorical affirmation goes beyond the limits of historical observation: "Here we find again the ambiguity which is the law of all Christian politics... an ambiguity which only individuals and particular groups can avoid (and in a way that is more apparent than real), not the Church militant, nor the political parties which defend her rights." Rován also indicates his legitimate preference for the position of Heinemann on the problem of German re-armament and East-West relations, but he should not thereby conclude that Heinemann and his friends "are the real Christian democrats" (p. 260).

In general, Rován emphasizes the conservative character of German Christian Democracy; another commentator might with equal justice see it as part of that development that Bishop Grosche has called "leaving the ghetto," and might point out, for example, that the workers are less alien to the Church in Germany than in most of western Europe. Whatever one's personal political sympathies, the reader cannot fail to admire the way in which Rován has provided a valuable history of his subject in less than 300 pages; the book is a pleasure to read, and shows that it is possible to be at once brief, complete, and suggestive.

(F. X. Q.)

PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

1.

The New German Catechism. It is extremely welcome news that the distinguished German Catholic publishing house of Herder has now opened a New York branch, and that its first project is the translation of the already-famous "new" German catechism, now available in a popular-priced \$2 edition, bound, a book-making bargain. It is to be hoped that it will be widely used, discussed, and criticized; interested parties (and what parent, priest, or religious is not?) would do well to keep up with the informed, up-to-the-minute, and unpretentious little journal of Canon F. H. Drinkwater, *The Sower*, and see the many lines of convergence in the whole catechetical movement.

This Herder catechism is the fruit of a long and patient process, originating in the work of the Catechetical Society of Munich, which began at the end of the 19th century. The distinctive feature of their approach was to start from something concrete, some narrative or at least some picture, but preferably from some *Scriptural* story, and proceed from there to the relevant doctrine and if necessary a particular catechism-answer. As time went on, the catechetical movement was enriched by the liturgical and theological revival, and began to be conceived as an active pastoral education, vitalized both by the liturgy and the bible. Men like Dr. Josef Goldbrunner, present editor of the society's periodical, have helped keep psychological principles in view in the composition of the new catechism.

Many parents will be pleasantly surprised to see how, without abandoning the formal question-and-answer (though this is reduced to its proper place as the final brief resumé of a lesson), a use of

this catechism can lead to serious meditation and a quickening of their own faith. Although their children will not be ready to profit from it much before they are eleven or so, parents may be glad to have a little advance preparation, and it would be interesting to see what use could be made of it among parish confraternity groups, the upper grades of grammar school, etc.

The book consists of 136 lessons, plus a few pages of prayers and rules for Christian life. After three introductory lessons on the Church as our guide to the purpose-of-life, the lessons cover four main parts as follows:

1. On God and our salvation: here the lessons are grouped together under the three Persons of the Trinity, and cover the Apostles' Creed.
2. On the Church and the Sacraments.
3. On living according to God's Commandments.
4. On the Last Things.

The Old Testament and the life of Our Lord are apparently left to be done in other ways. The drawings have been thoughtfully conceived, but will probably not prove attractive in America. The lessons have a fairly rigid structure: each begins with Scripture, a text or a Gospel episode very briefly stated; then come several paragraphs of doctrinal explanation, review-questions which rework this explanation, and finally the formal catechism question-and-answer. It might be best for teachers to fill out the rudimentary vestiges of narrative that survive from the earlier Munich method, and good teaching in general has not been rendered less urgently needed by this text-book; nevertheless, with Fr. Drinkwater we may say that "the questions and answers in this German catechism set a new high standard of practical common-sense and Scripture-soaked

theology, which is bound to have an effect wherever the Church's duty of proclaiming the Good News is seriously and willingly accepted by clergy and people."

(J. E. C.)

2.

Biblical Archaeology (Westminster Press). This is the best available introduction to its subject, a large, pleasantly-written, and profusely-illustrated volume of that name by G. Ernest Wright, and actually worth its \$15 price. It presents an accurate, up-to-date summary of archaeological findings presented and developed in relation to sections of the Bible, especially the Old Testament, which are treated in chronological order. The clarity and simplicity of the text is perhaps deceptive, for the amount of information which has been digested and rendered palatable—and even exciting for the non-expert—is formidable.

The book's large format is determined by its handsome and carefully chosen photographs and illustrations, which really succeed in bringing the text alive. Since future editions will undoubtedly be called for, one might suggest that the maps were not all together in the back, but placed within the sections to which they are relevant.

Bibliographies are carefully presented at the end of each section, and Dr. Wright has tried to give real direction to the reader who wants to study further; he goes to the trouble of mentioning as many paperbacks as possible, gives periodical references when the material is so new as to be unavailable in book form, etc. In general, this book is of value both to the beginner and to the advanced student of biblical archaeology.

(S. S. C.)

3.

Spiritual Life. The good work done by the editors of this quarterly (published by the Discalced Carmelite Fathers, 1233 So. 45th St., Milwaukee 14; \$3.00) should not pass unnoticed. Founded a few years ago as an American—and somewhat more popular—counterpart to *LIFE OF THE SPIRIT* and *LA VIE SPIRITUELLE*, its issues usually center on a single subject; the discussion of Christian humanism in the latest (December 1958) issue, for example, would be of great help to any beginner in the subject. Bishop Wright provides a characteristically forthright piece on "Christocentric Humanism"; "The 'Frontier Days' of the Human Spirit" by Paul B. Steinmetz, S.J., is a bibliographical essay any college student could read with profit. Thumbing through this and past issues brings one melancholy thought to mind, however: the adventurous articles are almost all by clerics. Why are lively lay minds so few?

(W. B.)

4.

Three Cardinals: Newman, Wiseman, Manning. (Kenedy, \$5.50). This incisive biographical study of three 19th century English Cardinals is a further contribution of E. E. Reynolds, already appreciated for his books on St. Thomas More (now in the Image paper series) and St. John Fisher. Mr. Reynolds is in command of the available materials, and manages to remain even-tempered and fair to the contributions—and limitations—of all three men. He writes attractively and sees things with historical perspective. Although the book provides many other good things, it is understandable that the eminent Jesuit historian, Fr. James Broderick, in a review-article for *THE CRITIC* (Dec. 1958–Jan. 1959), makes extensive use of it in connection with

the recent controversy over Newman which grew out of Msgr. Fenton's statement (*THE AMERICAN ECCLESIASTICAL REVIEW*, June 1957) that "objectively speaking, Newman had no cause whatsoever to complain about the treatment accorded him by the Catholic leaders or the Catholic public after his reception

into the true Church." After studying the various causes to complain which are documented in Mr. Reynold's book, Fr. Broderick appears amply justified in feeling that "enough has now been said" to lay what he calls this "Counter-Newman Legend" finally to rest.

(J. E. C.)

CHRISTIAN "IMPERIALISM" AND NEGRO CHARITY

In this latter part of the twentieth century, the Church will find itself in a particularly climactic period. Western tutelage of "backward humanity" is at an end. The step-children of Africa, that last untutored continent, have now grown into troublesome nationalists, eagerly asserting their independence of colonial authority. And under their influence, even the less unbridled, Christianized Africans are beginning to show signs of headstrongness. Pupils, carefully nurtured by Mater Ecclesia, now presume not only to question her relationship with colonial power, but even treat it as a somewhat dishonorable affair. A recent expression of these ephemic broodings were the disturbances in Leopoldville, where the Catholic missions were attacked.

Many persons sympathetic to nationalist aspirations in other regions, could not help considering the recent Congo incidents as wanton impertinence. For the Belgian colony's indigenous population has long been vaunted as among Africa's most prosperous dependent peoples. The Church too could take pride in a policy which, accepting her assistance, had made the Congo, in the words of *CROCIATA MISSIONARIA*, "the most flourishing mission ever known to Church history." Of the 16,337,200 native inhabitants, one third is Catholic. Such impressive missionary achievement, allied with genuine social progress, were in many minds perfect assurances of an unruffled future.

It was a deceptive cosiness. For African minds, "the Christian religion," in the words of a Belgian priest, "was disappointing and (colonial) policy a farce." The pill is not easily swallowed. As Father Mosman's article, "L'Imperialisme Culturel de L'Eglise?" (*LA REVUE NOUVELLE*, July, 1958) points out, "we are so convinced of our cultural superiority, that even if we acknowledged economic and political error, it is difficult to admit that by introducing Western civilization, we have committed an unforgivable crime." To speak of civilization is, for many of us, to mention Saint Thomas, Chartres, the Crusades. What are the African counterparts? True, under our guidance they have come a long way, but they are still quite far from our achievements. After all, we might concede, they started from nothing.

These arguments are in fact absurd. Europe's "civilizing" mission, as well as "Africa's savagery" are myths invented to justify colonial expansion to the nineteenth century's common man. As Father Mosmans observes, "colonialism attempts to implant a new culture by absolute denial of any existent culture. . . . Colonial war is a gigantic commercial undertaking, and in this perspective, the subjection, in the strictest sense of the word, of the indigenous population is a prime necessity." Neither the governments nor the commercial corporations which embarked on colonial schemes, were in the least concerned with spreading culture. As for social

welfare, little was being done by the "superior" nations, at that time, even for the population on their home grounds. It is perhaps for this reason that the notion resembling a "divine right of nations" took such firm hold in the common mentality. The French peasant and the British sweatshop worker were thus offered a vicarious share in a rather contrived patrimony. Tales of savage cruelty courageously tamed by gunpowder, and heart-warming accounts of natives thus brought to thirst for "civilization," were naively accepted by the western "common man." Then, through systematic destruction of indigenous cultures, the colonists went about creating the waste-land they had invented. The mystique and the method proved highly successful. Only recently, when an obscure demagogue named Hitler convinced a nation without colonial possessions that "civilizing missions" should not be restricted to Africa, did the doctrine's full meaning become clear to us all.

The methods and results of colonization were among the major preoccupations of African intellectuals, attending the *First International Congress of Negro Writers and Artists*, in Paris during the Fall of 1956. (For the proceedings, and a continuing study of related concerns, see the successive issues of *PRÉSENCE AFRICAINE* (17, rue de Maligny, Paris 5, France.) Aimé Césaire, a poet of considerable stature and deputy from Martinique, calls it culture assassination. Convinced of their monopoly on civilization and of the black man's savagery, the colonial powers boldly proclaim their superiority in all matters. They introduce Western organizations and impose their concepts on all phases of the colonized peoples' economic, social and interior lives. Indigenous culture as well as individual thought becomes mummified. According to Dr.

Fanon, a psychiatrist, this is the explanation of the apathy so prevalent among colonized peoples. "The will to live, to go on," he writes, "becomes more and more vague." But this is precisely the result which the colonizing powers seek. They can then proceed to restore archaic and static systems, caricatures of formerly vital institutions, in the name of respecting the subjected people's traditions. "And among the ruins is born," says Césaire, "not a culture, but a sort of cultural undergrowth which, condemned to a marginal existence in relation to European culture, placed in an artificial condition and deprived of the life-giving contact with the masses and popular culture, has no chance of becoming a true culture. The result is the creation of cultural perversion throughout vast areas." Africans are then presentable as inhabitants of a kind of ethnological museum—along with a smattering of pseudo-westernized men as special attractions, for the diversion of tourists.

To what extent has the Church been a partner in these wrongdoings? Not all Africans concur on the degree of complicity, but not even the most conciliatory voices would suspend arraignment. In some cases the charges appear bitter, and always startling to unprepared Western ears. Some insight into the climate from which they have arisen can be gained from a quotation found in *Le Nationalisme français et les missions*, written in 1939, by Father Perbals, O.M.I., and prefaced by Cardinal Baudrillart: "History of the missions offers many examples of too much zeal from messengers of faith on behalf of their own nations. The missionary has, as do few others, the power of promoting his country's foreign policy . . . and temptation in this direction is all the greater since the other roads of patriotic activity are closed to him." These words written by

Father Schwager, S.V.D., appeared in his *Zeitschrift für Missions Wissenschaft*, 1916. Father Perbals agrees that this is a temptation to be avoided. Missionaries come to offer natives "not material civilization, but faith, etc." But later, while discussing a problem of colonial education, he suggests that "it is in this sense that missionaries have been called the best auxiliaries of national influence in the colonies. Happy are the governments which have understood and which, in gratitude, have generously supported the missionaries' colonizing and religious work." (In this context, recall the warning and the alarming quotations presented in Walter Dirks' "The One Message in the One World," *CROSS CURRENTS*, Summer 1955.)

Now that colonization is receding, Africans like Henri Effa, National President of the Young Christian Workers in Camerouns and member of the International Office of this Catholic Action group, joins other Africans in asking if "a Christianity which emptied us of ourselves, can survive." "More and more," writes Mr. Effa in the article "Actualité Africaine et Christianisme," in the *EGLISE VIVANTE*, March 1958, "Our élite is eluding the Church's influence. . . . After going through the big schools where the religious question is never raised, our students show a sort of suspicion for whatever appears to have a confessional taint; they are suspicious of a certain narrow paternalism, which has never let the African laymen ask embarrassing questions of the Church."

These questions, when raised by Negro priests in the important volume *Les Pretres Noirs s'interrogent* (Les Editions du Cerf, 1957), are all the more provocative since they are expressed in firm attachment to essential doctrine. "Before considering the Negro priest, as such," write Fathers Verdieu and Ondia, "we should like to show that the

term is not a snobism but a perfectly legitimate theological meditation." In their essay "On Being both priest and Negro," the authors declare "Christ must be given his Negro face without disfigurement." This is the challenge with which Western Christians and Western Christianity must now come to grips. Nowhere has it been presented in such good faith as in this collection of articles by Negro priests.

Nevertheless, the tone is sometimes sharp. An article on the necessity of adapting missionary methods in the Belgian Congo decries the still-surviving assumption that the Negro is essentially superstitious, an opinion which leads to the judgment that instinctive forms of Negro spirituality should be systematically stamped out. Father Mulago's article, "Le pacte du sang et la communion alimentaire," pointing out parallels between tribal blood pacts and the sacrament of the Eucharist, would probably perplex and offend most western Christian sensibilities. All in all, however, the essays of this collection represent inevitable variations of a fervor which for almost 2000 years has inspired every manner of man under the sun.

In the light of the example of Negro charity which this book represents, colonialism's most shameful misdeeds and the Church's well-intentioned mistakes are so tempered as to appear simply as misunderstandings, however painful their historical burden. Father Mulago cites Bossuet's definition of the Church as one of the most beautiful: "The Church is the diffusion and communication of Christ . . . and this Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." We must ask ourselves if we still possess sufficient fervor to meet with these demands of Negro charity, so that we may re-encounter the living Christ.

LÉON KING

"THE SEVENTH SEAL"

This Swedish film of Ingmar Bergman, responsible for both direction and scenario—gives an impression both of great abundance and restraint; it is extremely complex yet completely transparent, brilliant in its celebration of language but nevertheless bathed in a severe silence. No film has ever better shown the exactness of Kafka's phrase, "The lute strings of modern poets are immense rolls of celluloid."

The Seventh Seal is nothing less than a work of poetry, one of the finest which has brightened the screen, and this is the reason for its difficult simplicity. We must not go to it for ideas, or some preconceived thesis—not even that of "demystifying Christian mythology," whatever that means! There is no hidden formula, nothing which would allow anyone to classify this work in some reassuring category, or put it to use as a polemical weapon; it is an unbroken line of poetry, terrible and beautiful. (As Bloy said, "Beauty is always tragic, because its song is about something lost.")

Since we ought to summarize the subject of this film, we are fortunate in having its author perform this obligation for us: "In my film the knight comes back from a crusade, as in our time a soldier returns from war. In the middle ages men lived in terror of the plague; today we live in terror of the atom bomb. *The Seventh Seal* is an allegory whose theme is very simple: man, his eternal search for God, with death as the only certitude." Allegory it is, and let us burden the commentary for the benefit of those who want "to know the story." This knight in the midst of the ravages of the plague represents man in quest of a response to his destiny; his squire rides beside him as the type of hearty free-thinker. There are also false

witches burned alive, a renegade priest, terrible monks who practice flagellation, and finally a charming family of traveling players, who radiate a joy for life, carefree and pure. Only the latter will cross without difficulty through the human forest, whose trunks come crashing down one after the other at the passing of Death.

With this summary, we have said all that there is, and yet we have said nothing.

Here the critical spectator may present some objections. To the degree that Bergman, an agnostic whose father was a minister, pretends to evoke the Middle Ages, we cannot be satisfied. Surely man then lived "in terror of the plague," but equally in the hope of eternal life. Their joy was as vast and white as their cathedrals, which are mirrors of that world, and teem with men, devils, angels, and saints, with the forest background of magic leaves and animals whose mad procession is directed by a bloody Tree. The Middle Ages can be seen, therefore, as a period both of wisdom and brutality, as learned as it is naive, ready for every adventure, human or divine. Certainly men feared death then, but not in terms of life, but of salvation. This gave existence an awareness that was deeply tragic, but not desperate, for grace was stronger than all crimes. "All things shall be well, and all matter of things shall be well," the illiterate 14th century mystic, Juliana of Norwich, maintained tirelessly at the end of her visions.

In passing, let us make one point of exegesis. The fragment of the *Apocalypse* from which Bergman drew his inspiration will be seen to have no connection with death, if we replace it in its proper context. It deals with an ancient biblical theme, *the day of Jahweh*, which

catastrophes and wars proclaim throughout history; there was no special emphasis on the death of the individual. In Scripture the seventh seal, when opened, does not reveal the secrets of life and death, but the judgment of God on the whole human race. And this seal is broken by the Lamb. The whole *Apocalypse* is nothing but a song of consolation and hope. "Emmanuel will be their God. He will wipe the tears from their eyes. And there will be no more death." This climate is absent from Bergman's work.

But having gotten this far, we must plunge again into the film and see to what a great extent it cannot be contained in any resumé. Bergman tells us that its origin lies in his boyhood reveries, when during the Sunday preaching he looked with both joy and fear at the fabulous universe of medieval sculpture—the angels, beasts, devils, saints, whirling about in landscapes of light and shade. And under the Cross the Knight plays chess with Death. This is a fine image, in which the poem is revealed at its source. The characters, therefore, come before us from the depths of a first, unsullied glance; they do not want to "say" anything, they have several possible meanings, since the author tells us that for a long time "belief and doubt have made themselves his faithful companions." He has not chosen between them, but has kept on his way with all his dreams, childish terrors and desires. The squire laughs and gets indignant, but the knight looks about and prays; the mob either wallows in pleasure or flagellates itself. The travelling actors dance and smile, the lovers hide, the children play; and death, with his fearful waxen face where only his eyes flame black, stops at each crossroad with his chess game, ignorant himself of the final secret. But at the end of the road, when, during the terrible storms, Death

approaches the group assembled in the old castle, it is a little servant girl—silent up to this point—who, with a humble smile, pronounces Christ's words: "It is consummated."

Life only appears more beautiful here when it is so frail and menaced, and in Bergman's art nature as a whole gleams with a dazzling and pale light, which of itself is a *forewarning*. There is nothing like those great silver heavens, except perhaps that obscure white sea which, from the beginning, announces the coming of Death, and accompanies him with an inconsolable moan. We feel the bitter wind on the beach and the odor of the leaves in the meadows at dawn. Each face inscribes itself on the tender screen of this world, with its weight of flesh, the grain of its skin, the furrows of its tears and smiles. Certainly the mask of death already breaks through, under both the rudest and the most delicate features, but now and then it seems that death itself is only the mask of another face.

Everything is a matter of long glances and questions. The living look at each other ardently, and these exchanges search, evade, caress, and burn. The living look at Death, insistently, quietly. There are long dialogues with a background of silence; they grow out of silence and return to it, like a song rising from man's depths, an echo which everyone will hear in himself at the hour that separates dawn from night.

Every shot brings light and shade together in an almost magical combination, so subtly that it is difficult to fix any line between them. The images are both solid and fluid, constantly consumed before our eyes in movements that escape detection. Bergman's theater training is obvious, but the richly conventional aspects of scenes and the plastic combination of images possess the fascinating charm of paintings which grew

out of the mist of dreams. There is no ellipsis; everything is shown, but everything begins beyond words and figures, a hidden splendor unveils itself and disappears. Here for the first time in the cinema is the shadowy sun of "Desdichado"; we are reminded of de Nerval's

phrase: "In just a second now the night will be black and white."

JEAN MAMBRINO

(reprinted from *CAHIERS DU CINÉMA*, May 1958)

(The initialed notes were contributed by George Drury, James J. Greene, F. X. Quinn, Sally S. Cunneen, and Joseph E. Cunneen.)

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